

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Ofsted Subgroup

Minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 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/11/12 Minutes

Decision

To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 29 July 2011 as a correct record.

CYP/OSG/11/13 Oral Update on the Ofsted Inspection Framework

The Quality Assurance Manager provided an oral update on the Ofsted Inspection Framework. The new framework would apply to all schools and would reduce the number of judgements in each inspection from 31 to five. The emphasis would be on learning and teaching. Ofsted inspectors would spend more time in classrooms. In the pilot they saw 40 lessons when inspecting secondary schools and between 15 and 20 when inspecting primary schools. There will be a greater focus on reading. At primary level the inspectors will hear the children read and at secondary they will look at how the reading skills are applied. There will no longer be a separate judgement on governors, they will instead be part of the overall judgement on leadership. The framework is implemented in January 2012. Manchester City Council developed a self assessment to send to all schools. To achieve a "good" rating, schools would need to have levels of attainment in line with the national average or demonstrate rapid progress to the national average, which would be a challenge for some Manchester schools

A member noted that under the new framework, schools would no longer be rated on the contextual value added. The Quality Assurance Manager confirmed this was the case, but assured members that schools did still need to be clear on the value they add and how they are ensuring that children who are behind in attainment are catching up. The floor standard that schools must reach in Primary schools is 60% of pupils achieving combined attainment in English and Maths, and 87% children making 2 levels progress in English and 86% 2 levels progress in mathematics.

A member asked what the reaction of headteachers was to the new framework. The Quality Assurance Manager said they recognised that the framework signified a substantial shift.

Members expressed concern at the speed in which the framework was being introduced and how quickly schools were being expected to adapt to new criteria for success. The Quality Assurance Manager acknowledged that the changes were being implemented rapidly. There had been a pilot phase and two Manchester schools were involved in this. The Quality Assurance Manager explained that the quality assurance reports from each school would all be submitted to the Council by the week following the meeting. From these, Children's Services will identify the trends, although it was already clear that achievement in maths was an issue across the city. She told members that schools which were deemed to be outstanding by Ofsted had steadily and consistently raised achievement over time. In schools where achievement varied from year to year, it was often because of inconsistency in teaching. She emphasised that without consistently good progress children who are disadvantaged when they enter the school never catch up.

Decision:

To note the report.

CYP/OSG/11/14 Oral Update on the Academy Application for Gorton Schools

The Quality Assurance Manager provided members with an update on the application for academy status by schools in Gorton, including Wright Robinson, Gorton Mount and Cedar Mount. Progress towards Academy status is being implemented. The likely, but not confirmed, completion date is April 2012.

Decision:

To note the report.

CYP/OSG/11/15 Oral Update on Ofsted Reports considered at the previous meeting

The Quality Assurance Manager provided members with an update on the progress with Abbey Hey Primary School. The school's Ofsted report was considered at the previous meeting and the school was deemed to be "inadequate" by inspectors. The Quality Assurance Manager informed members that the school was being inspected again on the same day as the meeting. The members agreed how surprised they were that the school had been deemed inadequate. The Quality Assurance Manager reassured members that the headteacher and governors of the school were focused on making rapid progress. Discussions with the headteacher would follow the outcomes of the monitoring visit.

Decision

To note the report.

CYP/OSG/11/16 Ofsted Reports

The Subgroup commented on a range of Ofsted reports from inspections that had taken place since their last meeting. At its last meeting the Subgroup agreed to look at all reports which judged the school to be outstanding or inadequate, along with a selection of those that had taken place in the Central district of the city. There were no “inadequate” inspections since the last meeting. Reports A and B below were “outstanding” and C, D and E were from the Central district.

A: Beaver Road Primary School

The school was inspected on the 20-21 September 2011, and was rated by Ofsted as “outstanding”. The report reflected the consistency of the learning at the school and the significant improvement since the previous inspection in 2007, at which it was rated “good”. The Quality Assurance Manager confirmed that the current headteacher had been in place at the time of the previous inspection.

B: Manley Park Primary School

Manley Park Primary School was inspected on 5-6 October 2011 and was found to be “outstanding”. The Quality Assurance Manager noted that the attainment was satisfactory but that the school had made extremely good progress.

The Subgroup agreed to send a letter to both schools which had been rated as “outstanding” to congratulate them.

C: Stanley Grove Primary School

Stanley Grove Primary School was inspected on the 13-14 July 2011 and Ofsted rated it “satisfactory”. The Quality Assurance Manager told members that the school had made changes that were necessary for it to improve, but these were not yet fully embedded in the culture of the school. She said the school was more effective in its leadership and management than it had been at the time of the previous inspection, when it was also rated as “satisfactory”, but the headteacher and governing body needed to be more rigorous in holding others to account.

A member expressed surprise that the school achieved inadequate attainment, but only satisfactory overall. The Quality Assurance Manager confirmed that the overall result was a balance of all the judgements.

D: Oswald Road Primary School

This school was inspected on the 3-4 October 2011 and was found by Ofsted to be “satisfactory”. The Quality Assurance Manager pointed out to members that the attainment was above the floor targets, but the inconsistencies in teaching led to less consistent progress through the school for children. A member noted that this judgement was particularly insightful and asked whether Ofsted were in a good position to make such specific judgements. The Quality Assurance Manager said school inspectors generally agree that it is possible to tell how effective a teacher is

during an observation. Additionally, other evidence such as progress is taken into account in making the judgement.

A member asked how the local authority would follow up the inspection results for schools such as these that are not performing well, but not in special measures. The Quality Assurance Manager said for some schools the Council would follow up by asking the school to outline how it will make the changes required. For others, including Oswald Road Primary School, the local authority would arrange for a quality assurance officer to follow up the Ofsted targets with the school and meet with the governors to ensure the school is making the necessary improvements.

E: Chorlton High School

Chorlton High School was inspected on 20-21 September 2011. Ofsted found the school to be “good”. The Quality Assurance Manager said the report was very positive. She pointed out that the curriculum and the rapid response to problems in place as particularly good. Members welcomed the achievements of the school, particularly relating to leadership and management. The Subgroup agreed to send a letter to Chorlton High School to congratulate it for the inspection results.

Decision

1. To write to Beaver Road Primary School and Manley Park Primary School to congratulate them for achieving an ‘outstanding’ rating in their Ofsted inspection.
2. To send a letter to Chorlton High School to congratulate it for its extremely good inspection results.

CYP/OSG/11/17 Work Programme of the Ofsted Subgroup

Members discussed the Work Programme of the Subgroup. Members noted that they would receive any inspections that were “outstanding” and “inadequate” and all those undertaken in the North District of Manchester. Members asked for the papers to include the rating for each of the school’s previous Ofsted inspections.

Decision:

To request that for each Ofsted inspection report the Subgroup receives, the Subgroup is also informed of the results of past inspections.