

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Ofsted Subgroup

Minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2012

Present:

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

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

CYP/OSG/12/05 Minutes

Decision

To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2012 as a correct record.

CYP/OSG/12/06 Inspection of Academies.

The Subgroup discussed the request from the previous meeting to ask the Quality Assurance Manager to clarify how academies will be inspected. The Quality Assurance Manager clarified that academies will be inspected under the new inspection framework and whether these reports would be published.

The Subgroup referred to schools that the Department for Education has encouraged to apply for academy status. Members agreed that the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee should receive a report that provides details of the schools that are converting to academies.

Decision

1. To note the report
2. To agree that the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee should receive a report that includes details of the schools that are converting to academies.

CYP/OSG/12/03 Ofsted Reports

At the last meeting of the subgroup, members agreed to consider Ofsted reports for schools inspected under the new Ofsted Inspection Framework so that they could assess the effect of the new framework on the results of schools. The Quality Assurance Manager told members that nine schools have been inspected under the new framework. From the results so far, there is no clear pattern to how inspection results have been affected. Three schools have stayed the same, four schools have gone down one grade and two schools have improved. The inspection reports included in the agenda papers provided the results for five of those schools.

A: Moston Fields Primary School

This school was inspected on 30-31 January 2012 and was rated by Ofsted as satisfactory under the new inspection framework. The Quality Assurance Manager told members that the school had improved since the previous inspection, particularly in the behaviour and safety category in which the school was rated as 'good'.

Members noted that the inspection took account of parent's views from the parent survey. Overall, pupils make good progress in the lessons where teaching is good but there were some occurrences where more able pupils were not challenged enough. Members noted that the inspection report recognised that the school provided a safe environment for children, and the good behaviour of the pupils.

B: Higher Openshaw Primary School

This school was inspected on 17-18 January 2012 and was rated by Ofsted as satisfactory. The Quality Assurance Manager informed members that the school had gone down one grade since its previous inspection in June 2007 where the overall effectiveness of the school was awarded a "good" rating.

Members noted that there is a good relationship between staff and pupils. Pastoral care is a high priority and effective. This is reflected in the Ofsted score for the behaviour and safety category, which was good. Members noted the leadership and the governing body of the school needed to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation to ensure better teaching and outcomes for pupils. They also noted that the quality of the teaching was rated as satisfactory as more able pupils were not challenged effectively in some classes.

C: St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School

This school was inspected on 18-19 January 2012 and was rated by Ofsted as "good". The Quality Assurance Manager told members that the school has maintained the results of its previous inspection in April 2007.

Members noted that the quality of teaching was good, particularly in reading where teaching is planned around the needs of the pupils. Children are regrouped in mixed age group according to their learning needs. Although teaching was good, the inspection highlighted the need for teachers to provide work that challenges the most-able pupils more. The subgroup noted that the school has been particularly successful in improving the attainment of the large number of pupils entitled to free school meals, and in 2011 the attainment gap for these pupils was significantly lower than seen nationally. Members also noted that the school was strongly supported by parents and carers. Overall, members felt that this was a good all-round school.

D: Bowker Vale Primary School

This school was inspected on 23 – 24 January 2012, and was rated by Ofsted as good. The school has improved its rating since the last inspection in June 2009, when it was rated as satisfactory. The Quality Assurance Manager told members that school has had a new head teacher in place since January 2012, but the interim

leadership team has worked effectively to improve on the issues raised in the last inspection.

Members noted that the quality of teaching is consistently good, leading to rapid and significant improvements to pupils' achievement, particularly at key stages 1 and 2. Under the new inspection framework, schools do not have to provide a written evaluation to support their case. Members noted that the improvement to the school's result demonstrated the ability of the leadership to evidence the improvements to the school. Overall, members felt that this was a good school which met the needs of its pupils.

E: Seymour Road Primary School

Seymour Road Primary School was inspected on 18-19 January and was deemed to require special measures. This school was last inspected in November 2008 and the overall effectiveness of the school was awarded a "satisfactory" rating. The Quality Assurance manager told members that this result was due to inconsistent quality of teaching across year groups leading to inadequate pupil achievement. This is partly attributed to staff turnover, and absences over the past year.

Members noted that the Council has put in an Interim Executive Board to manage the school. This board includes council officers and Councillor Jim Battle. The Board is looking at other local schools that have been rated as good and outstanding to support Seymour Road to improve in a partnership arrangement. It was expected that the school would improve rapidly now this was in place.

Overview

The Subgroup discussed the themes that have arisen from this group of inspection results, particularly the emphasis on the consistency of teaching across year groups. In the 'satisfactory' schools members noted that the variation in the quality of teaching in different classes meant that sometimes more able pupils were not being challenged effectively to achieve the results they were capable of. In better performing schools, the reports indicate that the curriculum engages pupils so that they are learning at a level matched to their abilities.

Members discussed the role of the local authority to improve the schools that were rated satisfactory. The Quality Assurance Manager confirmed that the "satisfactory" rating would change to "requires improvement" from September 2012. Manchester currently has 35 schools that this category would apply to, based on their current rating. The Quality Assurance Manager said that the leadership and managers of all schools are now focused on raising standards in all school. Members noted the importance of partnering lower rated schools with other local schools that have been rated as "outstanding" to help them to improve.

Decision

To write to St Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School and Bowker Vale Primary School to congratulate them on the result of their Ofsted Inspection.

