

Young People and Children Scrutiny Committee – OfSTED Subgroup

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2013

Present:

Councillor S Newman – in the Chair
Councillors Reid and Keller

Mrs B Kellner, Co-opted Member, Representative of the Diocese of Manchester

Apologies:

Councillors Adams Carmody and Tavernor
Mr D Arnold, Co-opted Member, King David Schools
Mr L Duffy, Co-opted Member, Teacher Representative

YPC/OSG/12/10 Chair

The subgroup noted that Councillor Carmody (Chair) had given his apologies for the meeting. The Committee agreed to appoint Councillor S Newman as Chair in his absence.

Decision

To appoint Councillor Newman as Chair for this meeting of the subgroup

YPC/OSG/12/11 Minutes

Decision

To agree the minutes of the Scrutiny OfSTED subgroup held on 23 October 2013 as a correct record.

YPC/OSG/12/12 OfSTED Reports – Outstanding Schools

The Quality Assurance Manager summarised the achievements of each of the schools that had been graded as outstanding since the subgroup's last meeting.

A: Rodney House

This school had been previously inspected in 2010 and had been awarded an 'outstanding' rating. As a result of the most recent inspection in October 2012, the school had maintained this rating under the new inspection framework.

Members noted that all aspects of the school had been rated as outstanding. This was found to be due to the commitment of leaders, managers and the governing body to continually strive to raise standards and further improve the quality of teaching. The Quality Assurance Manager advised that the school had a particularly good level of expertise in the special educational needs (SEN) and Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provisions, the latter of which had an outreach role for other early years settings across the city. The subgroup welcomed the school's commitment to bring about further improvement in the monitoring of data to track pupils' progress as part of their self evaluation process.

B: St Margaret Mary's Primary School

This school had previously been inspected in 2010 and had been awarded an OfSTED rating of 'satisfactory'. As a result of the most recent inspection in February 2013, an overall rating of 'outstanding' had been awarded.

The Quality Assurance Manager described the outcome as a tremendous achievement, commending in particular the strong leadership of the Executive Headteacher who has the highest ambitions for the school. She added that the schools EYFS provision was a particular strength and that across the school, the children were proud of their school's achievement.

Decision

To write to Rodney House and St Margaret Mary's Primary Schools to congratulate them on the results of their OfSTED inspections.

YPC/OSG/12/13 Good/Satisfactory OFSTED Reports - 'Central District'

The Quality Assurance Manager summarised some of the key areas highlighted in each of the OfSTED reports that were provided to the Committee.

A: Barlow Hall Primary School

This school had previously been inspected in 2008 and had been awarded an OFSTED rating of 'good'. At its most recent inspection in November 2012 the school had maintained its rating of 'good'.

Members noted that the school provided well for pupils who speak English as an additional language, those with SEN, and those with additional places for pupils with autism or language difficulties. Pupils known to be eligible for premium funding were also found to have made good progress. The subgroup also noted that lessons were found to be well-planned with clear explanations, good attention to timings and the effective use of marking. The school was also noted to have a strong senior leadership team with strong support from middle leaders.

B: Medlock Primary School

This school had previously been inspected in 2010 and had been awarded an OFSTED rating of 'satisfactory'. At the most recent inspection in October 2012, the school had improved to that of 'good'.

Members noted the extremely high number of languages spoken at the school with a higher than average proportion of pupils who join or leave the school during the academic year. The subgroup noted the quality of teaching to be good, with pupils who were proud of the school and enjoy learning. The subgroup also noted that the local authority had provided good support and that there was a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses by the governing body.

C: Whalley Range High School

This school had previously been inspected in 2009 and had been awarded an OFSTED rating of 'satisfactory'. As a result of the most recent inspection October 2012, the school had successfully achieved a 'good' rating.

Members noted that school leaders at all levels were described as unwaveringly ambitious with strong leadership and commitment and ambition to improve life chances of students. They also noted that the governing body, described as extremely capable, had effectively held the school to account. It was also noted that the school had undertaken very effective steps to improve the quality of teaching improve performance with a relentless drive from school leaders. The subgroup noted that outstanding progress had been made in the proportion of students achieving five A* to C grades at GCSE level.

Members noted that students achievement in the sixth required improvement in order to achieve an outstanding rating. They also noted that students start with achievement that is well below the national average and had enrolled on courses that were not suitable.

(Councillor Newman declared a personal interest in this section due to having daughters who previously attended this school)

D: Barlow RC High School and Specialist Science College.

This school had previously been inspected in 2011 and had been awarded an OFSTED rating of 'satisfactory'. As a result of the most recent inspection in October 2012, the school had improved its rating to 'good'.

Members noted the outstanding leadership of the headteacher who had facilitated a rapid improvement across all respects over the last 18 months. Members were impressed to learn that pupils entered the school with below average attainment but made such good progress that by the end of Year 11 attainment was significantly above average, particularly in Years 7 to 9. The subgroup noted that the gap in achievement between pupils receiving the pupil premium funding and other pupils had narrowed considerably. They also noted the very effective leadership of the

Headteacher and governing body which aided the school in going from strength to strength.

Decision

To write to congratulate the schools about their recent OfSTED inspections.

YPC/OSG/12/14 Inadequate OFSTED Reports

The Quality Assurance Manager summarised the challenges for each of the schools that had been graded as 'inadequate' since the subgroup's last meeting,

Cravenwood Community Primary School

The subgroup noted the need to develop opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities that enable them to support each other and to improve the quality of care and supervision at lunchtime. Members also noted that an incidence of prejudice-based name calling, swearing and bullying had been highlighted. The subgroup discussed the schools improvement plan which had been written by and based on recent and accurate monitoring conducted by the Local Authority and the interim Executive Headteacher. They also noted that the plan confirmed the Local Authority's commitment to support the school and identify appropriate actions to help bring about the necessary improvement. Members noted that the plan's impact had been found to be evident certain aspects but given the short period of its implementation that pupils' achievement still needed to be addressed.

Newall Green High School

The subgroup noted that student were not making the progress that was expected of them, particularly in mathematics which was described as a legacy of poor teaching and leadership in mathematics which continued to hold back progress in Key Stage 4 and which led to substantial underachievement year on year. Members also noted that the governing body (responsible for three federated schools) needed to give more attention to improving achievement at this school. The subgroup noted the new rapidly establishment of more effective systems to hold staff to account with regards to improving students achievement and the application of teacher training. They also noted that the proportion of students with a statement of special educational needs was greater than that found nationally. The subgroup noted that the sixth form in well led and manage providing a beacon of aspiration for students and helping to forge good links with the local community.

Decision

To note the reports.

YPC/OSG/12/15 Outcome of Inspections since September 2012

The Quality Assurance Manager provided the subgroup with a list of all Manchester schools that have been inspected since September 2012. The subgroup had previously agreed to write all schools who had undergone inspection under the new framework regarding their outcome.

Decision

To write to all schools who have been inspected since September 2012 regarding the outcome of their inspection.

YPC/OSG/1216 Work Programme

The subgroup noted that this was the last meeting of the municipal year and that the subgroup's future work programme would be agreed once the subgroup had been formally re-established in the new municipal year.

There was a discussion about the scope and schedule of visits to be made by the subgroup. The Chair suggested that two primaries and two secondary schools be selected with a mixture of inspection outcomes. A member commented that where possible as much notice as possible given for future meeting dates once the subgroup had been formally re-established.

Decision:

To agree to defer consideration of the subgroup's work programme until the next municipal year.