

Overview and Scrutiny Ofsted Subgroup

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 13 November 2019

Present:

Councillor Lovecy – in the Chair

Councillors Hewitson, Madeleine Monaghan, Reid and Stone

Councillor Bridges, Executive Member for Children and Schools

CYP/OSG/19/14 Minutes

Decision

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2019.

CYP/OSG/19/15 Lily Lane Primary School Update

The Subgroup received an oral update on the progress of Lily Lane Primary School, following its inspection in October 2018. Officers informed Members that support had been offered to the leadership team at the school to help improve those areas that had been identified as requiring improvement. The Senior School Quality Assurance Officer stated that additional quality assurance visits had been undertaken to monitor progress at the school and he reported that positive improvements had been witnessed, and he was confident that this would be reflected in future Ofsted inspections and subsequent judgements.

Decision

To note the oral report.

CYP/OSG/19/16 Ofsted Inspections of Manchester Schools

The Subgroup received a list of all Manchester schools which had been inspected since the last meeting and the judgements awarded. The Senior School Quality Assurance Officer provided an overview of the list, commenting that no inspections were undertaken in the first week of term starting in September. She informed the Subgroup that seven school inspections had been undertaken to date, with four reports published at the time of the agenda being published for this meeting.

Members commented that the new format of Ofsted reports was significantly shorter and lacking the detail that had been provided in previous reports. Members commented on the use of language throughout the reports, stating that in places it was ambiguous and questioned whether it was the most appropriate to use. Members also debated the application of phonics as an appropriate method for the teaching of reading and writing that was a common theme throughout the reports. Officers responded that this was always used in an age appropriate manner to encourage and support the development of reading and writing.

The Senior School Quality Assurance Officer acknowledged the comments from Members regarding the brevity of the reports and stated that schools did receive a more detailed and comprehensive oral report from inspectors following the conclusion of an inspection. Officers reported that schools were always recommended to complete their own comprehensive notes from those meetings, as the level of detail that was relayed at those meetings was not included in the final published Ofsted report. Officers also commented that the language used and format of reports had been agreed following consultation, adding that all reports were quality assured both locally and regionally by Ofsted prior to their publication.

The Subgroup considered the recent Ofsted inspection report for Abbey Hey Primary Academy which had been judged as Good. Members noted the positive comments throughout the report and a member of the Subgroup, who was also a Ward Councillor for the area in which the school was located, commented on the positive contribution the Principal had made to the school. Officers acknowledged this comment and informed the Subgroup that the Principal had offered to share his knowledge and experience of the inspection process with other schools, which was welcomed.

The Executive Member for Children and Schools paid tribute to the staff at the school and reported that the school worked very well with parents and contributed positively to the local community. He said he had witnessed this when he had visited the school; however, unfortunately this important element was not captured in the new reporting format.

The Subgroup considered the recent Ofsted inspection report for Benchill Primary School which had been judged as Good. Members welcomed the report noting the many positive examples of good practice that had been identified by the Inspectors, particularly in regard to the children's enjoyment of reading.

The Subgroup considered the recent Ofsted inspection report for Collyhurst Nursery School which had been judged as Outstanding. Members commented that this was an extremely positive report and demonstrated the invaluable contribution nurseries could have on children. The Executive Member for Children and Schools stated that he would be meeting with the nursery school in the near future to discuss the long term funding of the provision and to understand how best the City Council could support them in the national campaign to secure better funding.

The Subgroup considered the recent Ofsted inspection report for Longsight Community Primary School which had been judged as continuing to be Good. Members commented upon the very positive report that had identified the significant and positive contribution the school had in the local community. Members specifically noted the comment that described children loving their lessons, stating that this was indicative of dedicated staff and a well-led school. A Member commented that the school was at the heart of the local community and he paid tribute to the Headteacher. A Member recommended that a visit to the school should be arranged for Members for the Subgroup and that an invitation also be sent to the Ward Councillors.

Decisions

1. To write to all of the Schools considered by the Subgroup at this meeting to congratulate them on their recent Ofsted report.
2. To arrange a visit to Longsight Community Primary School for Members of the Subgroup and that an invitation also be sent to the Ward Councillors.

CYP/OSG/19/17 Daycare Providers

The Senior Quality Assurance Officer (Early Years) provided the Subgroup with an overview of the current situation within the Early Years sector in Manchester.

The Subgroup considered the recent Ofsted inspection report for Brighter Beginnings Day Nursery which had been judged as Good. The Chair stated that she welcomed the report which demonstrated that improvements were being made. She further noted that this was a large provision and that the report demonstrated the importance of an effective leadership within daycare settings.

The Subgroup considered the recent Ofsted inspection report for Milkyway Preschool Playgroup which had been judged as Good. Members welcomed the report and the reported improvements at the setting when compared to the previous inspection rating. Members commented that this was a smaller setting and might benefit from establishing links with the local Longsight Community Primary School. Officers acknowledged this comment.

The Subgroup considered the recent Ofsted inspection report for Wmb Born2win Day Nursery which had been judged as Good. Members welcomed the report, noting that this was newly registered nursery.

Decision

To write to all of the Daycare providers considered by the Subgroup at this meeting to congratulate them on their recent Ofsted report.

CYP/OSG/19/18 Terms of Reference and Work Programme

The Subgroup reviewed the Terms of Reference for the Subgroup and the Work Programme. The Chair requested the reports entitled 'Support to Schools and Early Years Settings' and 'Ofsted Inspections of Childminders' be submitted for consideration at the meeting of 22 January 2020.

A Member who was also the Chair of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee recommended that the report entitled 'Wythenshawe Education Board' be referred to an appropriate meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee, rather than the Ofsted Subgroup. The Chair endorsed this recommendation.

Decision

To approve the Terms of Reference and Work Programme, subject to the above amendments.