

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – Ofsted Subgroup

Minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2022

Present:

Councillor Lovecy – in the Chair
Councillors Hewitson, Nunney and Reid

Apologies:

Councillor Foley

CYP/OSG/22/01 Minutes

Decision

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2021.

CYP/OSG/22/02 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 this information and informed Members that the inspection report for St Patrick's RC Primary School had been published since the agenda was issued. She suggested that the Subgroup consider this report at its next meeting, to which the Chair agreed.

The Subgroup considered the recent Ofsted report for All Saints Primary School, which stated that there had been no change to the school's overall judgement of good as a result of the section 8 inspection. However, the report noted that the evidence gathered suggested that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now and stated that the next inspection would be a full section 5 inspection. The Senior School Quality Assurance Officer advised that the school had not had a permanent head and deputy head for a period of time and had been identified by the Council as needing additional support. She outlined the support that had been provided including Support and Challenge meetings, chaired by the Director of Education, to which the Head and Chair of Governors were invited, as well as additional quality assurance visits and additional support from the Senior Schools Quality Assurance Officer allocated to their school. She reported that her service had also brokered additional leadership support from Armitage C of E Primary School, which was judged as an outstanding school. She highlighted some of the key themes within the report including the curriculum, reading and phonics and the alignment between Early Years and the Key Stage 1 curriculum, advising that her team and the school had already been aware that these were key areas for improvement. She advised that the section 5 inspection would take place within 2 years. She highlighted the challenges faced by smaller schools and advised that the partnership with Armitage Primary School had worked well and that a more formal partnership arrangement was being considered. A Member commented that the foundation stage had been modelled before the phonics test was introduced. She advised that the new Head was doing a good job and that the school was engaging

with the local area. In response to a question from the Chair, the Senior Schools Quality Assurance Officer advised that the school engaged with cluster working and was now more outward facing. She reported that the partnership working with Armitage Primary School was beneficial to both All Saints and Armitage as they could utilise expertise within both schools. The Chair commented that schools needed subject leaders for its curriculum subjects and that this was more challenging for smaller schools. She highlighted the benefits of sharing good practice between schools and welcomed that All Saints Primary had a good strategy for improvement.

The Subgroup considered the recent Ofsted report for Peel Hall Primary School. The report stated that there had been no change to the school's overall judgement of good as a result of the section 8 inspection but that the evidence gathered suggested that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. It further stated that the next inspection would be a full section 5 inspection. The Senior Schools Quality Assurance Officer provided the Subgroup with background information about the school, including poor Key Stage 2 results a few years ago, a new Headteacher being appointed and additional support which had been put in place. She reported that the school had already been aware of and working to address the areas which were then identified in the Ofsted inspection as areas for improvement. She highlighted the key points from the report and advised that an experienced Headteacher from another school was still mentoring Peel Hall's new Head and that her team was continuing to provide additional support in preparation for the full inspection within the next 2 years. In response to a question from the Chair, she advised that this was not as formal a partnership as the one between All Saints and Armitage but that there were clear areas that the other Head was providing support on. A Member reported that it was a shock for children when they moved from a small primary school to high school. She advised that the issue of small schools should be considered, including looking at whether they should join up with other schools, at least for staff development activities. She suggested that this could be something that the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee could look at, in addition to looking at school improvement more broadly. In response to a Member's question, the Senior Schools Quality Assurance Officer reported that every school had an assigned Senior Schools Quality Assurance Officer and that, where needed, Quality Assurance professionals were brokered to work with schools on areas for improvement. She advised that Peel Hall would also continue to have Support and Challenge meetings. She further clarified that the schools that the Subgroup was looking at in this meeting were receiving support from a Senior Schools Quality Assurance Officer, a Quality Assurance professional, Support and Challenge meetings and through a partnership arrangement, with the exception of Rack House Primary School which was only considered to require the universal offer of an assigned Senior Schools Quality Assurance Officer.

The Subgroup considered the recent Ofsted report for Rack House Primary School which had been judged as good. The Senior Schools Quality Assurance Officer informed the Subgroup that the school had received a short inspection in March 2018 under the previous Ofsted framework where it had been judged as continuing to be a good school. She added that the 2018 report had advised that the school could be moving towards being outstanding and that, therefore, its next visit should be a full section 5 inspection. She advised that, due to COVID-19, this next inspection had been delayed, taking place 3 and a half years later and under a new Ofsted

framework. She drew Members' attention to the achievements and the areas for improvement within the report. A Member expressed concern at the level of detail provided within Ofsted's new style of report and asked if the school was provided with more detail on what it needed to improve on. The Senior Schools Quality Assurance Officer advised that this detail was only communicated to the school. She reported that the inspection process was now more collaborative, that feedback was given to the school throughout the process and that the headteacher could observe the meeting between the inspectors where they reported back on the evidence gathered. A Member expressed concern that this information was not available to parents and Ward Councillors. The Senior Schools Quality Assurance Officer advised that the onus was on schools to communicate this information to parents and that some schools put their school improvement plan on their website. A Member highlighted that this school and many Manchester schools had provision for children from 2 years old upwards. She suggested that the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee look at Early Years at a future meeting.

The Subgroup considered the recent Ofsted report for Saviour C of E Primary School. There had been no change to the school's overall judgement of good as a result of the section 8 inspection. However, the report stated that the evidence gathered suggested that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now and that, therefore, the next inspection would be a full section 5 inspection. The Senior Schools Quality Assurance Officer informed the Subgroup that this was a small primary school and some of the key areas identified for improvement were phonics, reading and the curriculum. She advised that the concern that governors were not going far enough in holding leaders to account was being addressed. In response to a question from the Chair, she confirmed that there had been a high turnover of teachers at the school and that this issue would be explored. A Member expressed concern that faith schools could be more reluctant to partner with non-faith schools or schools from different denominations which was an issue if there were not many other Church of England schools in an area. In response to a question from the Chair, the Senior Schools Quality Assurance Officer advised that there were opportunities for cluster working, that many schools were in a number of different clusters in relation to different issues and that her team encouraged and signposted schools to work with others.

Decisions

1. That the Subgroup will consider the Ofsted inspection report for St Patrick's RC Primary School at its next meeting.
2. To write to all the schools whose reports were considered at the meeting, following their recent inspection reports and the Subgroup's discussion.
3. To arrange a visit to All Saints Primary School.

CYP/OSG/22/03 Terms of Reference and Work Programme

Members noted that the next meeting would be on 2 March 2022. A Member commented that more Members were needed for the Subgroup and that this would be raised at the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee meeting.

Decision

To approve the Terms of Reference and Work Programme.