

EDUCATION ATTAINMENT IMPROVEMENT BOARD

13 October 2015

Commenced: 3.30pm

Terminated: 5.00pm

Present: Councillor Cooney (Chair)

Councillors Bell, JM Fitzpatrick, Gwynne, Peet and K Quinn and Stephen Anderson

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Reynolds and Jon Murray

11. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest submitted by Members of the Board.

12. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Education Attainment Improvement Board held on 30 June 2015 were approved as a correct record.

13. GCSE RESULTS 2015

Consideration was given to a report of the Assistant Executive Director (Learning) setting out the GCSE results for Tameside schools this year, which showed an overall improved position on 2014 and an improvement in Tameside's ranked position both in AGMA and the north west. There had been some significant increases in performance in a number of secondary schools, but concerns remained about the performance of others.

It was explained that in 2014, the proportion of young people who obtained 5+ A*-C (English and Mathematics) was 53.7%. This figure was itself slightly complicated by the first entry / best entry rule introduced in October 2014. In 2015, the figure was 57.7%, excluding young people in special schools or the Pupil Referral Unit, representing a 4% rise.

Although at this stage, results were still to be considered as provisional as schools would be seeking to improve their grades by requesting re-marks of certain papers, the headline figure was still encouraging. An important element of this year's results, not just locally but nationally, was the Cambridge English Language iGCSE. The syllabus had been perceived as 'easier' by schools but there had been reports in the press that the marking of the papers had become more stringent, particularly for the higher grades. The fallout from this was likely to continue. A number of Tameside secondary schools adopted the Cambridge syllabus this year, some for the whole Year 11 cohort, other for particular groups of students. There had also been some concerns about the awarding of higher grades in Mathematics.

In terms of 5+ A*-C (English and Mathematics), the following schools made substantial gains this year:

- St Damian's RC Science College from 64% to 79%;
- Longdendale High School from 54% to 67%;
- Fairfield High School for Girls from 71% to 77%; and
- Audenshaw School from 63% to 71%.

Both Copley Academy and Astley Sports College made substantial gains but there was a caveat for both of these schools as the starting point was extremely low and both were only just still at the national floor standard of 40%. New Charter Academy were also at 40%.

Data was provided on the 5+ A*-C English and Mathematics results for all secondary schools. There were some excellent results here and the local authority had made an important contribution to this area of provision. There were some schools falling below the 32% national average last year for 4L progress but this was an area affected by the Cambridge iGCSE issue. Regarding the performance of Mathematics across the Borough, although the picture was not as secure as English, there had been substantial improvements since 2014. There were two examples of outstanding practice – Mossley Hollins and Alder, 11 schools improved their scores at 3L progress and 10 schools improved at 4L progress. Good progress had been made in an area that had previously been a cause for concern in the Borough.

The results detailed had left Tameside in an improved position with respect to rankings in both AGMA and also North West authorities. Out of 23 North West authorities, Tameside was previously ranked 17th and the 2015 ranking was 7th. In the AGMA region, Tameside was 7th and was now ranked 3rd. These were very encouraging results for most of the local authority's secondary schools but there were concerns about a small number.

In conclusion, the Board was advised that 2015 was the final year in which the performance of secondary schools was going to be measured under the current performance measures of 5+ A*-C (English and Mathematics) and expected levels of progress. From 2016, schools would be measured on Attainment 8 and Progress 8.

RESOLVED

That the progress made by the Borough over the past year and the new benchmarking arrangements for secondary schools in 2016 be noted.

14. EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE, KEY STAGE 1 AND KEY STAGE 2 RESULTS 2015

Consideration was given to a report of the Assistant Executive Director (Learning) detailing the performance of schools in Tameside in 2015 at Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

In particular, 58% of pupils in Tameside achieved a good level of development at Early Years Foundation Stage representing a 6% increase in 2014 and a 16% increase on 2013. Provisionally, 66% of pupils in early years achieved a good level of development nationally and this had risen 6% on 2014 and 14% on 2013. Tameside was ranked 17th out of 23 North West authorities and this was an improvement of 2 places from 2014.

For Key Stage 1, Tameside had seen a slight improvement in Phonics in 2015 with 71.5% of pupils in Tameside working at the expected standard compared to 69% in 2014 and nationally, 77% of pupils were working at the expected standard in Phonics. Data for Reading Writing and Mathematics at Key Stage 1 was also provided in addition to those schools that had seen improvements of 10% or above.

At Key Stage 2, 80% of pupils in Tameside achieved Level 4+ in reading, writing and mathematics combined. This was the same figure as in 2014 and in line with the provisional North West and national averages. Tameside, having sustained the huge improvement from 2014, was not 14th out of 23 authorities in the North West.

In conclusion, the Board noted that Tameside had again seen an increase in results at Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. This increase was in line with the increases in performance seen across the North West. Tameside had also sustained its significantly improved performance

at Key Stage 2 and disadvantaged pupils in the Borough performed highly compared to other pupils nationally. The challenges for Tameside primary schools were at Key Stage 1 and Early Years Foundation Stage.

RESOLVED

That the content of the report be noted.

15. PERFORMANCE AND BOYS

Consideration was given to a report of the Head of School Performance and Standards setting out a range of information in relation to boys' performance at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4. It also examined the performance of disadvantaged boys, those with Special Educational Needs and those with English as an Additional Language. Schools where particular groups of boys performed well in 2014 were highlighted.

The performance of boys in Tameside was below the performance of girls at both Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 2 and reflected the national picture. Though the results of boys in Tameside had been below those of girls, they had generally been in line with the national averages for 2014.

RESOLVED

That the current position be noted and the Board receive further reports in due course.

16. SCHOOLS SUMMIT – 6 JULY 2015

Consideration was given to a report of the Assistant Executive Director (Learning) providing feedback on the purpose and outcomes of the Tameside Education Summit held in July 2015. There were some very clear messages emerging from national speakers that had set the scene for schools working together and supporting each other.

There was no doubt that strategic approach involving schools working together enabled many issues such as succession planning, subject networks and school to school support to be addressed more effectively. The clear messages from the Summit was that change in Tameside's education system must be driven by the profession and the role of the local authority was to initiate and help lead that drive for change.

The work being developed within the Summit Task Group represented the first stages in developing a vision for education that looked forward to the next two to three years. Reference was made to an action plan appended to the report.

The response from all those who attended was extremely positive with many Headteachers asking for annual events of this nature.

RESOLVED

That the report and action plan be noted and an update report on progress with implementing the agreed action plan be submitted to a future meeting of the Board.

17. NEW PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Bob Berry, Head of School Performance and Standards, advised that the Department of Education had introduced a new set of performance indicators for the end of secondary school education, i.e. the end of Key Stage 4 which would come into effect in August 2016.

Prior to 2015/16 all students, secondary schools and academies were measured on how many GCSEs they achieved at A*-C including English and Mathematics and the levels of progress made

between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4. Next year this would be changing to Progress 8 and Attainment 8. The report focused on the change to 2016 only and did not reflect the changes to GCSEs coming in 2017 and these would be reported to the Board at a later date.

It was explained that Progress 8 was a new secondary accountability measure aimed at measuring the progress of pupils across a selected set of 8 subjects and designed to encourage schools to offer a broad and balanced curriculum at Key Stage 4 and rewarding schools for the teaching of all their pupils. It was a type of value added measure and pupils' results were compared to the actual achievement of other pupils with the same prior attainment. It had been introduced alongside another new accountability measure Attainment 8.

Attainment 8 was a measure of a pupil's average grade across a set suite of eight subjects. GCSE grades would be translated onto a 1-8 point score scale for 2016, with 1 being a grade G and 8 being an A*. Once the average point score had been produced for the pupil and the school, this would be used in the Progress 8 measure to determine the amount of progress that had been made. Progress 8 would measure how much progress had been made by pupils from the end of key stage 2 to the end of key stage 4 across the set of 8 subjects. An explanation of calculating Progress 8 and what it would mean for the pupil and the school were detailed and examples provided.

The Attainment 8 and Progress 8 measures were being introduced for all schools and designed to encourage all students to study a broad and balanced curriculum, and move the goalposts even more towards an assessment of performance based on achievement.

RESOLVED

That the changes to performance measures be noted.

18. KEY PRIORITIES 2015/16

Consideration was given to a report of the Assistant Executive Director (Learning) setting out some of the achievements of the last year and identifying some of the national and local challenges for education service for next year and beyond. New legislation and ever increasing demands on support services, at a time when local authorities and school budgets were reducing, all necessitated new ways of working.

There was no doubt that Tameside was now an improving authority in terms of its education provision. Relationships with school had improved significantly over the last two years and the Council had a much more informed position about its schools and academies because of the closer working relationships that had been established. However, capacity building and succession planning would be key to securing high quality leaders for the future who could be future system leaders and enable the local authority to establish a sustainable school to school support model.

The Assistant Executive Director (Learning) reflected on some of the achievements and the priorities for the next year and beyond in the following areas:

- School Performance and Standards;
- Access and Inclusion;
- Pupil Support Services;
- Pupil Referral Service;
- Traded Services;
- Schools Budget; and
- Post 16 Provision.

RESOLVED

That the content of the report be noted.

19. URGENT ITEMS

The Chair reported that there were no urgent items received for consideration at this meeting.

20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Education Attainment Improvement Board will take place on Tuesday 26 January 2016 commencing at 3.30 pm.

21. CHAIR'S CLOSING REMARKS

In closing the meeting, the Chair made reference to the forthcoming retirement of Heather Loveridge, Assistant Executive Director (Learning). He thanked Heather for all her hard work and commitment and wished her well for the future.

CHAIR