

# EDUCATION ATTAINMENT IMPROVEMENT BOARD

27 June 2017

Commenced: 3.30 pm

Terminated: 5.50 pm

**Present:**

<b>Councillor L Travis (Chair)</b>	
<b>Councillor JM Fitzpatrick</b>	
<b>Councillor Peet</b>	
<b>Councillor Robinson</b>	
<b>Councillor M Smith</b>	
<b>Paul Jacques</b>	<b>ASCL</b>
<b>Steven Pleasant</b>	<b>Chief Executive</b>
<b>Stephanie Butterworth</b>	<b>Executive Director of People</b>
<b>Bob Berry</b>	<b>Interim Assistant Executive Director, Learning</b>
<b>Maureen Leigh</b>	<b>Head of the Music Service</b>

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillor K Quinn and Jon Murray.

## 1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

## 2. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Education Attainment Improvement Board held on 28 March 2017 were approved as a correct record.

## 3. UPDATE ON PREPARATION FOR LOCAL AREA INSPECTION OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY

Consideration was given to a report of the Assistant Executive Director, Education, which provided an update on Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) in the local area and inspection preparation.

It was reported that, since September 2016, there had been considerable progress in terms of understanding the quality of current practice and having secure data sets for all aspects of SEND. The Local Authority now had extensive and easily accessible data sets for education and health, but the understanding and interpretation of this data was not yet embedded. However, the infrastructure to ensure that this happens and then plan strategically to address the issues, was now in place.

Five areas had been identified where the Local Area was making the most progress:

- Identifying and meeting needs in Early Years;
- Preparation for Adulthood;
- Children's Emotional Health and Wellbeing;
- The delivery of the Healthy Child Programme; and
- The needs of Young People in the Youth Justice System.

Eight areas had been identified where less progress was being made:

- There had been insufficient oversight and governance by senior leads of the implementation of the SEND reforms;
- Joint commissioning and strategic planning across the Local Area were as yet underdeveloped;
- Outcomes for SEND children and young people with SEND were not improving;
- Whilst leaders acknowledge high levels of parental dissatisfaction within the Local Area, there had been insufficient progress in bringing about the necessary cultural change;
- Likewise, there had been insufficient progress in engaging with young people with SEND;
- The engagement of Children's Social Care with the SEND reform agenda had been limited;
- The percentage of EHC plans completed within statutory timescales remained well below the national average, and not all agencies were contributing fully to the process;
- Crisis management for children and young people with SEND, particularly within Education was not yet effective.

It was explained that the urgent priority was to address the issue of:

- (a) The proportion of children and young people who had an EHCP in the Local Area; and
- (b) The effectiveness of systems to produce those plans within an acceptable timeframe, with contributions from all relevant professionals.

It was further explained that when compared to other Local Areas or statistical neighbours, not enough children and young people had a plan. As a consequence, needs were not being met and, in some instances, may not even have been identified.

In response to the concerns outlined above, the following actions were already underway:

- The recruitment of three additional professionals to work on the EHCP process;
- A review of processes within the Inclusion Service to speed up the process of assessment for an EHCP;
- A service re-design was currently underway and in the consultation phase.

As previously reported to the Board, academic outcomes for SEND students at EYFS, KS1 and KS2 did not compare well, although things improved at the end of KS4. Improvement in outcomes would take longer as three things needed to happen simultaneously:

- The improvement in Local Area Systems outlined above, which would result in:
- Improved collaboration and a sense of shared purpose between the Local Area and schools, which would in turn necessitate –
- Improved practice within schools, where improved SEND outcomes would result as a consequence of SEND being seen as a feature of good teaching, rather than a separate, specialised activity.

This was a substantial change in culture which would require the active engagement of leaders across both the Local Area and schools and the foundations for the change in culture were already happening.

A consultation had also been commissioned to establish issues in primary and secondary schools, from their perspective and the robustness of their own practice. The work was not yet complete and therefore not yet collated/analysed, but some interesting trends were already emerging.

The report concluded that the Director was both confident and optimistic about the direction of travel with SEND in Tameside. A relationship of trust had been established over the years would then improve even further when the improvements in the EHCP process start to become apparent. Ultimately, this would come about from the collective leadership of the Local Authority and almost one hundred head teachers/principles.

Discussion ensued in respect of the above and Members expressed their thanks for a positive report, which outlined a clear agenda for change. The Chair further stressed the importance of the engagement schools and head teachers in the process.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the content of the report be noted.**

### **4. CHANGES TO GCSEs IN 2017**

The Assistant Executive Director, Education, submitted a report explaining the introduction of the reformed GCSEs in English and Maths and outlined the changes and impact they would have to school performance.

It was reported that there would be a new grading scale of 9 to 1 for reformed GCSEs, with 9 being the top grade. The Department for Education's justification for this was that it would 'allow greater differentiation between students and would help distinguish the new GCSEs from previous versions'.

Grades 9, 8 and 7 were broadly equivalent to an A\* and A. Grades 6, 5, and 4 were in line with B and C grades. A 3 would be broadly similar to a D grade, with 2 and 1 taking in grades E, F and G. There was still a U (ungraded) mark. A 4 was broadly being compared to a C grade, although Ofqual warned against 'direct comparisons and overly simplistic descriptions'.

A grade 4 would be seen as a 'standard pass' and a grade 5 as a 'strong pass'.

For school performance tables, the government would publish 'standard passes' (grade 4 and above) but also the 'strong passes' (at grade 5 and above).

It was explained that Ofqual have said that, broadly, the same proportion of students would get a grade 4 and above as currently get a grade C or above. It also said a formula would be used which would mean that about 20% of all grades to seven or above would be awarded a grade nine. Pupils who obtained a nine would have 'performed exceptionally'. There would be fewer grade 9s than there were currently A\*s. In 2018 most other subjects would be graded this way.

A third wave of 9-1 graded GCSEs would be taught from September 2017 with the first exams in 2019, including: Ancient History, Arabic, Astronomy, Bengali, Business, Chinese, Design and Technology, Economics, Electronics, Engineering, film Studies, Geology, Italian, Japanese, media Studies, Modern Greek, Modern Hebrew and Panjabi. A few less-taught languages were the final subjects that were being reformed and those exams would be in 2020.

It was further explained that the current Year 11s would get English and Maths results under the new 1-9 grading scheme and the rest of these GCSEs would be graded A\*-G. The current Year 10 students would next year sit most of their GCSEs under the new system, but they may have some under the old system.

Given the rigour of the reformed GCSEs and the new mode of grading, there were concerns that students sitting the exams in English and Maths were at a disadvantage to previous cohorts, however, Ofqual had insisted that these students would not be disadvantaged.

A consequence of attaching new points to unreformed GCSEs for Attainment 8 purposes was that overall Attainment 8 was likely to fall. This was because the points attached to grades F, D, C and B in 2017 were less than the points attached. Attainment 8 would be unstable nationally for over 4 years due to the gradual re-scaling of GCSEs to grades 1 to 9.

## **RESOLVED**

- (i) **That the content of the report be noted;**
- (ii) **That further reports be submitted to the Board, to keep Members fully informed of changes to educational performance and the subsequent implications on Tameside's schools and pupils.**

## **5. LAURUS RYECROFT SCHOOL: A PRESENTATION BY THE LAURUS TRUST**

Martin Vevers, Head Teacher Designate and of the Laurus Ryecroft School and Holly Eckhardt of the Laurus Trust, attended before Members and gave a presentation in respect of the new free school in Tameside.

It was explained that the Ryecroft Laurus School was due to open in September 2018, in a temporary location with an initial intake of 150 pupils, which would rise to 210 pupils in future years.

It was further explained that the Laurus Trust was an Education Trust with Cheadle Hulme High School, the founder school, at its centre. Details were given of the structure and aims of the Trust and the aspirations for the Laurus Ryecroft School and its future students, including the vision for everyone regardless of background or circumstance to be inspired, to thrive in all environments, to recognise what it takes to succeed, to set aspirational goals and work hard to achieve them

Board Members thanked Mr Vevers for the presentation and sought clarification in respect of the proposed admission process.

Mr Vevers in his response, explained that the School would like to welcome a range of students from the local area and that the admissions criteria would not be selective on ability.

Further discussion ensued with regard to the name of school and Members asked if there was an opportunity to re-look at this, due to the position of school not being within the area associated with Ryecroft.

The Chair thanked Mr Vevers and Ms Eckhardt for their very informative presentation.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the content of the presentation be noted.**

## **6. PRESENTATION FROM ASPIRE+ TRUST**

Matt Bowler, CEO, Aspire+ Trust attended before Members and gave a presentation in respect of Aspire+ Trust.

It was explained that the Aspire+ Trust was formally launched in October 2013. It was established with a commitment to raising standards and providing the best possible deal for young people. It was based on a clear set of guiding principles that informed the work.

The strategic objectives of the Trust for 2016-18 were outlined as follows:

- To develop highly effective leadership and governance which had measurable impact on performance in all member institutions;
- To develop quality assurance systems that accelerated outstanding outcomes in all areas – allowing for early support and intervention where required;
- To develop an approach to professional development and teacher training which empowered highly competent staff as outstanding practitioners allowing for expertise to be deployed across the Trust to drive quality improvements; and

- To extend the influence and profile of the Trust to impact on areas of weakness in Tameside.

Aspire+ Trust Member Schools in Tameside were identified as follows:

- Ashton 6<sup>th</sup> Form College;
- Mossley Hollins High School;
- Cromwell High School;
- Astley Sports College;
- Hyde Community College;
- Longdendale High School;
- Alder Community High School; and
- Denton Community College.

The structure of the Aspire+ Trust was outlined and the curriculum network areas explained.

Previous and current Ofsted ratings were detailed for all Tameside schools within the Trust and Ofsted's recognition of the benefits of collaborative working within the schools was highlighted.

The challenges faced by one school in particular and the changes implemented to address these, were described and discussed.

An update on the progress of Academisation was given as follows:

- The AspirePlus Educational Trust was incorporated in May 2017.
- The Trust had collaborated with Tameside Local Authority on the full range of activities required to convert our schools to academy status.
- On conversion of the first two schools, the AspirePlus Educational Trust would immediately be the employer of 177 staff:
  - 92 Teachers
  - 85 Support Staff.
- Operating at full capacity the Trust would be responsible for the education of 1,800 young people.

Members thanked Mr Bowler for a very informative and enthusiastic presentation.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the content of the presentation be noted.**

## **7. PRESENTATION FROM THE MUSIC SERVICE**

Maureen Leigh, Head of Music Service, attended before Members and gave a presentation in respect of Tameside Music Service.

Ms Leigh began by sharing the vision of Tameside Music Service as follows:

“To develop a high quality cohesive service throughout Tameside which caters for all needs by providing structured pathways from first access to gifted and talented and optimising opportunities for collaboration and partnerships with other providers whilst ensuring that musical experiences for children and young people are positive, fun and engaging!”

The history, strengths, ethos and core values of the Service were outlined and the enrichment opportunities gained through partnerships and collaborations were detailed and discussed.

An overview of Music Service provision was given, including:

- Whole class ensemble teaching on a range of instruments/voice;
- Small/large group instrumental and vocal tuition;

- Individual tuition (including extra time for pupils identified as talented);
- Instrumental/vocal tuition to support pupils taking GCSE/BTEC;
- School-based ensembles and choirs;
- Borough-wide ensembles and choirs;
- Weekend 'play/sing' days;
- Music courses and staff training/network meetings/advice;
- Half-termly bulletins to schools highlighting opportunities;
- School-based bespoke training/staff meetings/classroom support;
- Bespoke music workshops for pupils on a range of themes;
- Instrument loan scheme;
- Concerts and other performance opportunities;
- GM Hub and other partners; and
- Community and family projects/sessions.

The Chair announced that Maureen was retiring after 30 years plus service with Tameside and, on behalf of Board Members, extended her thanks and best wishes to Maureen for her long service, hard work and commitment over the years and wished her well for the future.

## **8. URGENT ITEMS**

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

## **9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Education Attainment Improvement Board would take place on Tuesday 24 October 2017 commencing at 3.30 pm.

**CHAIR**