

# EDUCATION ATTAINMENT IMPROVEMENT BOARD

22 October 2019

**Commenced:** 4.00 pm

**Terminated:** 5.40 pm

**Present:** Councillors Feeley (Chair), L Boyle, Cooper, Fairfoull and Patrick Paul Jacques

**In Attendance:**

Steven Pleasant	Chief Executive
Richard Hancock	Director of Childrens Services
Catherine Moseley	Head of Access and Inclusion
Julie Waterhouse	Access Manager
Charlotte Finch	Head of SEND
Tony Shepherd	Head of Improvement and Partnerships
Amanda Aylward	Virtual Head

**Apologies for Absence:** Councillor M Smith, Elizabeth Turner and Andrea Radcliffe

## 10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

## 11 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Education Attainment Improvement Board held on 25 June 2019 were approved as a correct record.

## 12 VIRTUAL SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT

Consideration was given to a report of the Assistant Director, Education, outlining the successes of the Virtual School over the last year and also the priorities for the coming year.

Members were informed that from September 2019, Tameside Virtual School had expanded into Tameside Virtual School and College. It was explained that the Virtual School were committed to ensuring a high standard pathway of education from nursery through to higher education where appropriate. There were high educational aspirations for young people accessing the services and it was the aim to close the educational gap between them and their peers, as often their outcomes were determined by negative environmental experiences, not their true academic ability. Part of the gap in outcomes was due to attendance and exclusion and good relationships and routines with schools had been established, to improve this deficit.

The report gave details of:

- Schools Information data;
- Personal Education Plan completion;
- Pupil Premium Grant Funding Analysis
- Attendance Data 2018/19;
- Exclusion Data;
- Special Educational Needs and Disability;
- Attainment Data 2018; and
- Summary of the impact of the Virtual School in 2018/19.

Priorities for 2019/20 included:

- Support and develop the newly created role of Post 16 LAC Achievement Co-Ordinator to develop better information systems and increased numbers of care leavers in Further Education and Higher Education;
- Improved participation and engagement of young people in their PEP meetings;
- Development of a comprehensive and rolling training programme for all partners including schools, governors, social worker, foster carers and residential homes;
- Continue to work with School Improvements Partners in #TamesideLovesReading campaign with specific focus around LAC;
- Review of education and potential outcomes of Tameside young people in residential homes;
- Continued relentless focus around attendance and reducing fixed term exclusions; and
- Improve educational outcomes for all learners at their significant key stages in order to improve life chances.

Members commented on a comprehensive, positive report and sought further information with regard to the impact of the Tameside Loves Reading initiative in respect of Looked After Children (LAC). It was explained that there was a clear focus on LAC in terms of the Tameside Loves Reading programme, however results were difficult to quantify on an individual basis. Officers agreed to consider ways in which to collect more meaningful data, going forward.

## **RESOLVED**

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

### **13 SEND FORWARD PLAN**

The Assistant Director, Education, submitted a report summarising the key elements and recommendations of the SEND Forward Plan and the priorities for 2019/20.

It was explained that the Council had a statutory responsibility under the Children's Act 2014 to keep its special educational provision under review and to make sure there was the right type of provision and enough places to meet the needs of children and young people themselves.

Members were informed that the plan aimed to further improve the good or better offer from special schools to meet the needs of more Tameside children and young people. It also set out what would be done to develop and improve education provision for all children and young people with SEND in Tameside. It would be monitored and reviewed regularly so the Local Authority would know things were getting better for children and young people.

A copy of the Forward Plan for SEND provision 2019 – 2024 was appended to the report. The document was in the process of consultation, which was likely to result in further development and refinement, to ensure that, as an authority, key priorities and actions could be correctly identified for the next twelve months and beyond.

Detailed discussion ensued in respect of the content of the report and the Plan, particularly in respect of the importance of engagement/consultation with parents and carers going forward, as the plan was implemented.

Members made further reference to funding concerns in respect of SEND and the High Needs budget raised at the last meeting of the Board.

It was explained that a report had been submitted to the meeting of the Schools' Forum that morning (22 Oct 2019), where a series of recommendations had been agreed in principle, to address the forecast overspend of the High Needs budget, should it occur.

## **RESOLVED**

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

### **14 ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION POLICY REVIEW**

Consideration was given to a report of the Assistant Director, Education, giving details of a revised Elective Home Education Policy 2019, a copy of which was appended to the report.

The policy outlined for schools, parents, carers, guardians and related agencies, the procedures to be observed when a parent elected to home educate their child, who was of compulsory school age. The policy set out parents' rights to educate their child at home, together with the legal duties and responsibilities of Head teachers and Tameside Council. It also set out the arrangements Tameside Council would make in order to carry out its legal duties.

It was explained that elective home education figures had steadily increased over the last few years. This was in line with national data which demonstrated an increase of around 40% since 2014/15. It was further explained that there was no requirement for home educated children to be registered, as a result, Local Authority figures at any given time were likely to be underestimated. It was noted that the number of pupils returning back to school from home education had increased over the last 12 months.

Discussion ensued in respect of the increase in electively home educated pupils in Tameside and the possible reasons for this, including mental health issues and bullying.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the content of the report be noted and consultation recommended to enable approval of any final version by the Council's Executive Cabinet.**

### **15 END OF KEY STAGE DATA (UNVALIDATED) AND EDUCATION PRIORITIES 2019/20**

A report was submitted by the Assistant Director, Education, which set out the headline figures for Tameside at each assessment point, the performance against priorities, and next steps.

Headlines were detailed as follows:

- At the end of EYFS the gap between pupils achieving a good level of development in Tameside and pupils nationally had narrowed from 5.7% to 4.9%;
- KS1 results in reading, writing and maths remained similar to 2018, but there were improvements for boys in each and the gap to national narrowed by 1% in writing;
- At KS2, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths combined (RWM EXS+) remained at 63% (unvalidated) and was likely to rise to 64% once data was validated;
- KS2 progress scores in reading, writing and maths were above average with reading and maths improving year on year;
- Twenty-one vulnerable schools were the focus of support brokered by the Local Authority. These schools improved at a faster rate (2% in KS2 RWM EXS+). Eight schools were Local Authority maintained and 13 were Academies. Of the eight, the least vulnerable had an 8% increase and the most vulnerable had a 10% increase;
- Overall the above showed inconsistent improvement across phases and schools;
- Consequently, Tameside had not significantly narrowed gaps to national averages;
- The Local Authority's strategy of developing a school to school model of improvement had been positively reviewed and was evidenced by outcomes;

- Consistent improvement would require further targeted support to significantly narrow gaps to national averages; and
- The long-term priorities established in 2018/19 remained as priorities in 2019/20.

The report concluded that school and setting level data showed many improvements and some significant gains, however improvements remained inconsistent across the borough.

In comparison with North West Local Authorities, Tameside was one of few to have improved GLD (good level of development).

Phonics results were weak. Schools would be offered targeted support to improve this including partnership with the English Hub and Tameside Loves Reading phonics training.

Progress in reading at KS2, which had improved from 0 to 0-5, was statistically above average, and represented the impact of focused intervention, relationships and capacity through Tameside Loves Reading. Attainment was now a key focus as this was below national average in 2019.

The Local Authority focused support for schools had had a positive impact on KS2 outcomes. At KS4 Tameside had strengthened its position in comparison with North West Local Authorities.

The Local Authority's school strategy of developing a school to school model of improvement by working with partners and developing relationships had been positively peer-reviewed by GM colleagues and was evidenced by the improvement in schools receiving focused support. Consistent improvement across schools would require further targeted support to significantly narrow gaps to national averages.

The long term priorities established in 2018/19 remained as priorities in 2019/20, as follows:

- (i) Service Priorities:
  - Partnerships and Relationships
  - Capacity and Stability
- (ii) Policy Priorities:
  - Reading (with greater focus on Phonics)
  - Attendance
  - SEN support
  - Progression to Adulthood
- (iii) Performance Priorities:
  - Boys (levelling up)
  - Disadvantaged Learners

In respect of Early Years, it was reported that policy and performance priorities were determined by analysis of underperformance over time. Whilst there was evidence of improvement in Reading and Attendance in early years for boys, significant improvement at a borough-wide level would require continued resource and strategic focus over time.

## **RESOLVED**

**That the content of the report be noted and that the education priorities remain as set out in section 7.9 of the report.**

## **16 URGENT ITEMS**

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