

Minutes of a meeting of the EAP Education, Skills and Employment

At 5.00 pm on Wednesday 6th October, 2021

Held as a Virtual Meeting, Via Zoom

Present:-

Members

Councillor Scott Edwards (Chair)
Councillor Wendy Brackenbury
Councillor Leanne Buckingham

Councillor Philip Irwin

Officers

Cathi Hadley, Executive Director for
Children's Services
Jo Hutchinson, Senior School
Improvement Partner

Jenny Daniels, Democratic Services
Francesca McHugo, Democratic Services

29 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lee Wilkes.

30 Minutes of the meeting held on 25 August 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 August 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

31 Members' Declarations of Interest

The Chair invited those who wished to do so to declare interests in respect of items on the agenda.

No declarations were received.

32 School Effectiveness Update

The Panel considered a presentation of the Senior School Improvement Partner, on School Effectiveness.

Arising from the presentation and discussion, the following principal points were noted:-

- i) There were more academies than Local Authority (LA) maintained schools, with there being just one secondary school being LA maintained in North Northamptonshire. Some schools worked in locality clusters and these were a mix of LA maintained schools and academies and they appeared to be working well together. Some clusters included multi academy trusts as well.

- ii) A number of schools were outstanding or good, which was similar in number when compared between LA maintained and academy schools;
- iii) No Ofsted ratings had changed in recent months due to the coronavirus pandemic pausing all inspections. Should any school indicate their grading may change it would trigger a Section 5 inspection, which was a full one and could change gradings;
- iv) All headteachers had worked really hard to safeguard pupils, staff and local communities during the pandemic and the School Effectiveness Team had been visiting all LA maintained schools and assisting them to make progress;
- v) Ofsted had informed schools to expect their next inspection dates to be up to 6 terms late and the School Effectiveness Team was advising the schools to be as prepared as possible for their inspections;
- vi) There were School Improvement Partners (SIP's) assisting with governance in all schools that had been rated as 'requires improvement', for some time. SIPs were in schools assisting them to be Ofsted ready when the inspection did take place, even if it was delayed.
- vii) An Associate Headteacher had also been employed as part of the School Effectiveness Team. This person could take on the role of headteacher during a period of absence by a headteacher and could also assist the Leadership Team with bespoke work. Often a 'requires improvement' OFSTED rating was based around the leadership of a school and the Associate Headteacher could also assist in that respect;
- viii) The targeted improvement group was where team could be allocated to a school over a period of 18 weeks to assist it to improve;
- ix) It was pleasing to note that three schools had recently had monitoring inspections and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education was going to check if they had made progress in achieving a higher grading;
- x) They were also reviewing schools that were 'good' or 'outstanding' to ensure their next inspection did not lower their rating.
- xi) They also had a presence on recruitment panels and were also working with the diocese;
- xii) Their strategy was to talk to schools regarding their purpose and the team wished to work much closer with other departments across the Council such as Special Educational Needs teams to work in partnership to achieve the best outcomes for the school;
- xiii) Outside of the organisation the Service wished to provide clarity of roles and responsibilities, a clear definition of statutory duties and a clear, cool categorisation of schools based on their performance. The aim was to develop localised solutions.

RESOLVED that:

The presentation on School Effectiveness be noted.

33 Forward Plan of Executive Items

RESOLVED that:

The Forward Plan of Executive items be noted.

34 Forward List of Items for Education, Skills and Employment EAP

In considering the forward list of items for the Panel, it was noted that the amalgamation of Tennyson Road Infant and Alfred Road Street Junior Schools would be discussed at the next meeting to be held in November.

It was also suggested that an update on 'requires improvement' schools be brought to the Panel at the beginning of Spring Term, 2022.

RESOLVED that:

The forward list of Items for the Panel be noted, subject to the comments now made.

35 Close of Meeting

There being no further items of business, the Chair declared the meeting closed.

Chair

Date

The meeting closed at 5.50 pm