

## **Lancashire County Council**

### **Education Scrutiny Committee**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 28th November, 2017 at 10.30 am  
in Cabinet Room 'C' - The Duke of Lancaster Room, County Hall, Preston**

#### **Present:**

County Councillor Christian Wakeford (Chair)

#### **County Councillors**

L Beavers	E Nash
S Clarke	J Parr
B Dawson	J Potter
A Gardiner	J Rear
A Kay	P Steen
Ms S Malik	C Towneley

#### **Co-opted members**

Mr Kenvyn Wales, Representing Free Church Schools  
Mr John Withington, Representing Parent Governors  
(Primary)

County Councillors Bernard Dawson, Lorraine Beavers and Jean Parr replaced County Councillors Nikki Hennessy, Jenny Molineux and Munsif Dad respectively.

#### **1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from County Councillor Anne Cheetham, Mr Ian Beck, Mrs Janet Hamid and Dr Sam Johnson.

#### **2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**

County Councillor Andrew Gardiner declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 4 as his son had sat his SATS last year. County Councillor Stephen Clarke declared a non-pecuniary interest as he had a child and three grandchildren in education.

### **3. Minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2017**

**Resolved:** The minutes from the meeting held on the 26 September 2017 be confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

### **4. Standards of Achievement in Lancashire Schools**

The Chair welcomed Stephen Belbin, Head of Service School Improvement; and Paul Dyson-Knight, Senior Advisor Team Leader Secondary, to the meeting.

The report presented explained that 92% of Lancashire schools were judged to be good or better. This was above the national average (89%) and the North West average (90%). This placed Lancashire schools second against their statistical neighbours. Standards of attainment were close to the national averages at the Foundation Stage, below the national average at Key Stage 1 and in line at Key Stage 2. They were below the average at Key Stage 4.

The Committee were satisfied with the renewed emphasis on reading. Members were advised that the data on reading would filter through to Key Stage 4.

Concerns were raised about the fact that Religious Education was not part of the new English Baccalaureate Certificate (EBacc). EBacc was a school performance measure. It allowed people to see how many pupils got a grade C or above in core academic subjects at Key Stage 4 in any government funded school.

Members were informed that new technical and vocational qualifications had started to emerge and schools had started to engage with these to support a broad and balanced curriculum.

The Committee queried whether employers were kept informed on the changes to curriculum which could potentially impact on attainment and future employability of young people.

Members were advised that there was more literacy demand in the new exams and teachers were having to adapt the way they taught in order to better prepare children. It was reported this could also have an impact on the future recruitment of teachers.

The changes in the system would enable a child's education progress to be tracked from its reception year right up to exams at the end of Year 11. A vast majority of schools held pupil progress meetings every term where the pupil's progress in all subjects was considered.

The Committee felt there was more to be gained by placing governors in a more proactive role in their local communities. Ofsted stated that governors should be more strategically involved in school improvement. It was confirmed that most

secondary schools had a Governors Improvement Plan in place and governors were engaging in debates around curriculum.

**Resolved:** That the;

- i. Number of Lancashire schools judged to be good or better in Lancashire be noted
- ii. Standards of attainment in Lancashire schools be noted.

## **5. Attainment of Looked After Children**

The Chair welcomed Audrey Swann, Head of Education for Looked after Children and Challenging Groups, to the meeting.

The report presented explained that the attainment of all Lancashire's looked after children, wherever they were placed, was collated at the end of Key Stage 1 (age 7 years) and Key Stage 2 (age 11 years) for primary pupils, and the end of Key Stage 4 (age 16 years) for secondary pupils. Those looked after children who had been in care for at least 12 months prior to the end of the key stage assessments were part of a group known as OC2, this was the group for which attainment was compared to other looked after children nationally, and to those pupils who were not looked after. The attainment measures that were collated for looked after children were those that were reported on nationally for all pupils.

It was reported that looked after children did not attain as well as children not looked after but did attain better than children in need. Looked after children changed schools frequently and this had an impact on their attainment. Change of home placement also had an impact. Members enquired if there were statistics on why there were so many school moves. Members were advised that for Ofsted reasons, the Looked after Children Team did track how many school moves each child had and that most school moves were due to home moves. There were very few looked after children who were permanently excluded from a school.

It was noted that once looked after children were settled in a safe and stable environment then greater progress in education was made.

**Resolved:** That the;

- i. Report presented be noted
- ii. The need to support the attainment of looked after children in policy decisions, contact with schools and services at a county wide level be understood and noted.

## **6. Elective Home Education**

Frances Molloy, School Attendance/Children Missing Education Lead, was welcomed to the meeting.

The report presented explained that the Elective Home Education Team, located with the School Improvement Service, provided support for families who had elected to make arrangements for their children's education other than school. It outlined the support available from the team, the types of challenge applied when concerns were identified and the limits of the local authority's ability to monitor and report on attainment within the current legislative framework.

The Committee was informed that parents were not required to give an explanation or decision as to why they elected to home educate. Elective home education was seen as a viable option for people in an area where there was a body of support from other home educators.

Concerns were raised about elective home education. It was noted that LCC did not have a duty to visit homes. LCC did not have routine powers to go out to homes to investigate if suitable education was being made. Where families had decided to home educate, there was no requirement to follow the curriculum and no requirement to sit exams. LCC did however liaise with the home educated families and the local colleges to arrange drop-ins on how to achieve the best transition into post 16 years education.

**Resolved:** That;

- i. The arrangements in place within Lancashire to support families who are home educating be noted.
- ii. The arrangements in place within Lancashire when it is determined that suitable education may not be in place through elective home education arrangements be noted.
- iii. The limitations on the identification/reporting of the attainment of home educated children be noted
- iv. A Notice of Motion be produced supporting the proposed changes under the Home Education (Duty of Local Authorities) Bill currently progressing through the House of Lords, for the Full Council meeting on 14 December.

## **7. Education Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2017/18**

The work plan for the Education Scrutiny Committee for the 2017/18 municipal year was presented to the Committee. The topics included were identified at the work planning workshop held on 21 June 2017.

A revised version of the work plan was presented at the meeting. Members were asked if there were any items in particular they would like discussed at the March meeting regarding the item on school improvements. Items raised were:

- Issue raised by head teachers of nursery schools – concerns over the transitional funding pot up to 2020. Fears over closure and what happens in terms of funding after 2020.
- Update from SEND

These were agreed to be included in the work plan for a future meeting.

**Resolved:** That the report presented be noted.

## **8. Urgent Business**

There were no items of Urgent Business.

## **9. Date of the Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Education Scrutiny Committee is due to be held on Tuesday 27 March at 10.30am, Cabinet Room C, County Hall, Preston.

I Young  
Director of Governance, Finance  
and Public Services

County Hall  
Preston