

Decision maker	Cabinet Member for Education
Subject:	Detailed action plan to address issues identified by Ofsted in its inspection of the council's arrangements for school improvement in Portsmouth
Date of meeting:	30 June 2016
Report by:	Alison Jeffery, Director of Children's Services
Wards affected:	All
Key decision (over £250k):	No
Full council decision:	No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the action plan that has been developed in order to respond to the findings of the Ofsted inspection undertaken in February 2016 of the council's arrangements for supporting school improvement in Portsmouth. A copy of the Ofsted report (published on 23rd March 2016) and the council's action plan are attached at Appendices 1 and 2.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Cabinet Member approves:
- The action plan as set out at Appendix 2.

3. Background

- 3.1 The action plan responds to the findings of the Ofsted inspection undertaken in February 2016 of Portsmouth City Council's arrangements for supporting school improvement. The plan acknowledges that the achievement of pupils and learners in Portsmouth is not improving quickly enough and that at ages 11 and 16, and from 16 to 19, outcomes remain below the national figures and too many pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education. A step change is required in outcomes at all ages
- 3.2 The action plan also acknowledges the changing educational landscape and a sharper focus on accountability in an increasingly autonomous schools system, as set out in the Government's White Paper '*Educational Excellence Everywhere*'. The Government's aspiration is that every school should become an academy or in the process of becoming an academy by 2020, with the large majority of academies operating within Multi Academy Trusts.

The Government's expectation is that the role of local authorities should change accordingly; in particular the expectation is that responsibility for school improvement moves away from local authorities to a school-led system. Currently a third of all schools in Portsmouth are academies, operated by 11 Academy Trusts.

- 3.3 The action plan addresses the five areas for improvement identified by Ofsted:
1. Robustly challenge all providers of education to improve pupils' and learners' rates of progress at every stage, particularly disadvantaged pupils and boys
 2. Set out clearly the role and function of local authority school improvement services in championing excellence in all Portsmouth schools and colleges, including academies
 3. Agree precisely with stakeholders how officers broker and quality assure the support made available to schools and other providers from external sources and between schools
 4. Ensure all local authority school improvement services are held firmly to account for their contribution to raising standards and improving lives
 5. Promote effective collaboration between local authority school improvement services, to accelerate improvements in department's performance and maximise the local authority's impact in raising educational standards

Developing a collaborative approach

- 3.4 To make the step change that is required to improve standards and accelerate the progress of our pupils' will require a collaborative approach that acknowledges the changing educational landscape and the limited and reducing resources of the local authority for school improvement. Partners will harness the collective resource that is available in the City in a way which adds value and supplements the work that already goes on in individual schools, Multi Academy Trusts and Teaching Schools.
- 3.5 Headteachers and other partners in the city have committed to establishing an education partnership and collaborative programme of school improvement that can embed shared values and build on the historically strong relationships between the local authority and the education sector in Portsmouth, supplementing without duplicating work within MATs. The partnership will seek to establish clear and accountable arrangements to support sector-led school improvement and capitalise on potential economies of scale. It will provide a structure to support the transition from local authority to sector led school improvement arrangements. The local authority will continue to deliver its statutory duties in relation to school improvement and act as a strategic commissioner and champion for parents, children and young people, and in particular those who are vulnerable to poor outcomes including disadvantaged pupils and white British boys.

- 3.6 The local authority will work closely with the Regional Schools Commissioner to oversee a smooth transition towards academisation and will look to capitalise on the opportunity to increase the capacity for sector led school improvement through Multi Academy Trusts and the establishment of a second teaching school in the City, as well as addressing long standing structural issues in terms of transition dips (infant, junior, primary, secondary and post-16) through vertical alignment where appropriate

Key priorities

- 3.7 The five areas for improvement are addressed through 8 key priorities which are set out in more detail in the action plan at [Appendix 2](#):
1. Establish and implement collaborative arrangements in Portsmouth to support sector-led school improvement
 2. Robustly challenge all providers of education to improve pupils' and learners' rate of progress at every key stage
 3. Make more effective use of the local authority's statutory powers of intervention in order to bring about a significant improvement in school performance
 4. Improve outcomes for underperforming cohorts of children and young people with a particular focus on disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils, boys and SEND
 5. Building on existing strengths make effective use of available school performance data, information and predictions and systematically analyse data in order to identify priorities and ensure that appropriate challenge and support can be given to school leaders and governors
 6. Accelerate improvements in school attendance particularly for vulnerable groups (LAC, SEND, young carers and children on child protection plans) and those of a secondary school age
 7. Ensure all local authority school improvement services are held firmly to account for their contribution to raising standards and promote effective integration of services to maximise the council's impact on raising standards in schools
 8. Improve post-16 outcomes for young people with a particular focus on achievement and progression to skilled employment or higher education

4. Equality impact assessment

- 4.1 No impact assessment has been carried out as the proposals do not have any impact upon a particular equalities group.

5. Legal comments

- 5.1 The general duty for local authorities to promote high standards of education and training is set out within the Education Act 1996. Under s.13A a local authority has a duty to promote high standards, ensure fair access to opportunity for education and training and promote the fulfilment of learning potential. In addition, under s.13, the local authority has a general

responsibility to contribute towards the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community by securing that efficient primary, secondary and further education are available to meet the needs of the population of its area. The action plan recommended within this report will assist the City Council in meeting these statutory duties.

5.2 It is within the cabinet member's powers to make the recommendation sought.

6. Finance comments

6.1 There are no financial implications in the short term arising directly from the recommendation in this report. The resources required to deliver the action plan are contained with existing cash limits for 2016/17 and should be delivered within the same budget as currently available. However, if the Government proceed with the proposed cut to the Education Services Grant for 2017/18 then consideration will have to be given to how this area is resourced in the future.

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Signed by: Alison Jeffery, Director of Children's Services

Appendicies

- Appendix 1 - Letter from Ofsted
- Appendix 2 - Action Plan

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Detailed Action Plan to address issues identified by Ofsted in its inspection of the arrangements for school improvement in Portsmouth	Education
Achieving Excellence - Portsmouth City Council's education strategy for 2015/16	Education

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

Signed by:
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