

EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD

RECORD OF DECISIONS of the meeting of the Education Advisory Board held on Wednesday, 17 July 2019 at 4.00 pm in Conference Room B, Civic Offices

Present

Councillor Suzy Horton (in the Chair)

Councillors Frank Jonas

Mike Stoneman, Deputy Director of Children, Families and Education - Education Service

Jo Peach, Director of Learning, Portsmouth Teaching School Alliance

Fiona Calderbank and Steve Labeledz, Joint Chairs of the Portsmouth Education Partnership Strategic Board

Rob Sanders, Church of England Diocesan representative

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tom Coles and Terry Norton.

2. Declarations of interests

Councillor Suzy Horton declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest as a governor at Craneswater Junior School.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting - 6 February 2019

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2019 be confirmed and signed by the chair as a correct record.

Dates of future meetings

Tuesday 8 October

4 pm - ground floor room 3, Civic Offices

Tuesday 4 February

4 pm - room B, floor 2, Civic Offices

4. Provisional Results for EYFS, KS1 and KS2

Mike Stoneman, Deputy Director for Children, Families and Education, had requested "Provisional Results for Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Key Stage 1 (KS1) and Key Stage 2 (KS2)" as an additional agenda item and tabled the report. EYFS, Phonics and KS1 results are based on NCER proxy

data and those for KS2 use provisional data published by the Department for Education on 9 July.

During the presentation Mr Stoneman highlighted the following areas:

EYFS

EYFS results were slightly disappointing in that whereas there was a very slight increase nationally there has been a small decline in Portsmouth (70.9% in 2017, 70.3% in 2018, 69.5% in 2019). Jo Peach said results had not been broken down yet but progress in achieving literacy (reading and writing) goals was below progress in achieving prime learning goals (such as physical development and personal development). Other areas such as "understanding the world" were better than literacy and maths.

Phonics

In Phonics the gap between local and national results remains the same. There is no detailed breakdown for the figures yet. It might be that newly arrived children with English as an Additional Language (EAL) affect the results.

Key Stage 1

KS1 reading and maths results at national and local remain the same as last year. KS1 writing results have dropped one percentage point both locally and nationally.

Key Stage 2

For the combined measure of Reading, Writing and Maths at expected standard there was no change both locally and nationally; the gap is still eight percentage points. There has been some notable success in maths and writing where the gap between Portsmouth and national has narrowed, Reading is an area of concern, reflecting a national trend of results in Reading dropping (3% drop locally and nationally). Results depend on the variety of language used in the tests. Secondary schools are using "third tier" (more sophisticated) vocabulary and primary schools are being encouraged to do the same. A lot of work has been done on Writing (2% increase in results) and Year 2 leaders have a much better grip on the levels expected. Jo Peach and Sarah Hilditch (Lead Moderator) have done a lot of training and teaching is now much more consistent. Positive feedback was received at the School Improvement Board held on 16 July. KS2 Maths has seen a 6% rise (compared with a 3% rise nationally) which shows the effectiveness of the support provided by the Solent Maths Hub in terms of Primary Mastery in Maths. Schools who do not receive so much support do not do as well. More detailed information will be received in the autumn and validated results will be available in January and brought to future meetings.

In response to questions from members it was noted that:

- Portsmouth's primary results have been below national for the last three years with the exception of EYFSP and the Good Level of Development measure which was previously above national.

- Tests have changed radically and are more challenging; they are more difficult for working class pupils than for middle class ones.
- Pupils progressing through the school system with lower levels of literacy is a factor as well as deprivation/poverty. Literacy is a major issue in Portsmouth and there is now a push to encourage pupils to read outside the classroom and speak and write using more sophisticated and subject specific vocabulary, which is now being taught in secondary schools from Year 7 onwards. Ms Calderbank noted giving students a reading list via social media every holiday seems successful.
- Attracting high quality staff recruitment and ensuring they stay is another factor in ensuring that the quality of teaching remains high.

The figures show that when initiatives "shine a torch" on an area, for example, maths with support from Solent Maths Hub, results can improve. However, Portsmouth is in competition with the rest of the country and needs to close the gap with the national figures. Although Hampshire's figures are better they mask a wide variation, for example, Winchester has high results and Gosport and Havant have low results (sometimes lower than those for Portsmouth).

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

5. Ofsted school inspections spring term 2019 - summary

Mr Stoneman presented the report and highlighted the positive results of inspections in table 1. Nearly 92% schools are now Good or Outstanding. Bramble Infant & Nursery had been a priority school but continue to be Good and the new headteacher is doing well. Building work had reduced the amount of outside space for children which had impacted on behaviour. The inspectors considered The Harbour School could be Outstanding and it was hoped the next inspection could happen before the school transfers to Delta Education Trust in February 2020. There are no inadequate schools. One of the six schools Requiring Improvement, Stamshaw Junior, is now part of the University of Chichester Academy Trust, having moved from Portswood Primary Academy Trust.

Cllr Horton said the outcomes of the inspections were good news, showing the dedication of staff and quality of work, so it was frustrating when it came to test results.

In response to questions Mr Stoneman and Ms Peach explained that:

The local authority has no control as such over academy schools but works closely with Multi Academy Trusts and the Regional Schools Commissioner, who monitor what is happening. Mr Stoneman was hopeful that the five academy schools that are Requiring Improvement will move to Good over the course of the next 1-2 years. He made the point that many of them were requiring improvement when they were under local authority control and that it takes time to turn things around.

The KS2 results are "green shoots" indicating improvement and that schools are moving in the right direction. Academy schools invite the local authority in

to help with circumstances particular to Portsmouth and relationships are productive and helpful. Joint working allows knowledge and experience to be shared. As an example, ARK Ayrton Primary Academy asked the local authority for help and their results have improved substantially as a result of support from both the LA and ARK.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

6. School improvement update - July 2019

Mr Stoneman presented the report and noted that as a result of strong partnership working the Teaching School had been successful in securing two SSIF (Strategic School Improvement Fund) bids for approximately £200,000 each to support the Challenge The Gap (CTG) project and the SEN Review project. Ms Peach highlighted the following areas in Appendix 1:

Challenge The Gap

- 49% pupils in the CTG project improved their attendance. Samples were small (about 15 pupils per school) but the pupils now enjoyed coming to school.
- 96% pupils in the CTG project improved their ability to work independently.
- Many of the schools in the CTG project chose to focus on reading and improved the results of pupils in the sample. There will be a focus on reading from EYFS onwards throughout Portsmouth for 2019-20.

SEN Support

The main learning was around leadership and staff who now feel empowered because of the support from the SSIF project. More schools have increased their SEND staffing and improved leadership as a result of the SSIF project.

Improving outcomes for most able

This project strand received the least focus so has had the least impact so far. Training has been done at primary level on greater depth and the results will be analysed when they are available.

Curriculum development

- Maths - The Maths Hub has done a "stunning job." Some of the schools Requiring Improvement have not engaged with the Hub; the local authority can encourage them but does not have authority to enforce them. Mr Stoneman said he had extensive evidence showing the impact of the Maths Hub which he could demonstrate in his discussions with the MATs in the autumn term
- English - A particular focus has been given to Writing and results are slowly improving.
- MFL (Modern Foreign Languages) - support is highly effective though it has not been taken up as much as the support provided for English and Maths.
- Science - good staff have been helped to become curriculum leaders.
- Leadership - As Portsmouth is a priority area (category 6) it receives national funding and qualifies for government subsidies in leadership

training. National accredited qualifications are good quality but there is no local oversight. The new Ofsted inspection framework and the subject 'deep dives' means there will be even more focus on middle leadership training.

Priorities from September 2019 will be:

- Reading will be a key priority across all year groups.
- Communication, speech and language will be a priority for EYFS and KS1.
- SEN in mainstream education will be an area to develop; disparate groups will be drawn together.
- Curriculum development will include whole school and subject specific expertise, including computing and technology specialists. Ms Calderbank noted focus on Computing and IT in her school was decreasing as these areas change so quickly so it is now more on maths and science.
- School attendance needs to improve as it is still not near national levels for secondary. Ms Calderbank had analysed initiatives to improve attendance and it seems that, in her school, fining is the most effective method.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

7. School improvement support for LA maintained schools

RESOLVED that that the following motion be adopted

Exclusion of Press and Public

"Under the provisions of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the press and public be excluded for the consideration of the following item on the grounds that the report contains information defined as exempt in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972."

Under the following exemption paragraph numbers:

1. Information relating to an individual
2. Information that is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Mr Stoneman presented the exempt report and explained how maintained schools are prioritised for school improvement visits. CEOs of academy schools meet the local authority at least once a year. Special schools have a different priority system. Over 70 support packages of varying lengths were delivered to maintained schools (24 as at September 2018).

It was noted that one school may return to priority 1 (high) as they were giving serious cause for concern. They had tried to manage without support but despite a good Ofsted inspection their results were poor. Mr Stoneman has contacted the headteacher. A couple of priority 1 schools had problems with staffing. A priority 2 school listened to and worked with the LA and has seen

very good results in maths. A trial of bespoke visits for priority 3 schools is going well so far.

Quality of EYFS, KS1 and KS2 moderation has improved greatly thanks to targeted training with no schools being re-moderated.

New headteachers receive bespoke non-judgemental 'buddy' support which is closely allied to their needs and depends on whether they have been a headteacher before and if they have experience of Portsmouth schools.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The meeting concluded at 5.15 pm.

Councillor Suzy Horton
Chair