

EDUCATION, CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL

MINUTES of the meeting of the Education, Children & Young People Scrutiny Panel held on Monday, 20 October 2014 at 7.00 pm in Ground Floor Meeting Room 5, Civic Offices, Portsmouth

Present

Councillors Will Purvis (in the Chair)
Ben Dowling
Ken Ferrett
Lynn Stagg

Education Representative

Helen Reeder, Portsmouth NUT

Apologies for Absence

Councillor Paul Godier

29. Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Paul Godier.

30. Declarations of Interest (AI 2)

Councillor Dowling declared a personal interest as he is a governor at Miltoncross School.

31. Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 September 2014 (AI 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Education, Children & Young People Scrutiny Panel held on 22 September 2014 be confirmed as a correct record.

32. Review into Pupil Premium (AI 4)

The Chair welcomed all guests to the meeting and introductions were made around the table before evidence was given.

- (a) Julien Kramer, Interim Head of Education and Marc Harder, Interim Education Information Commissioning Manager

Mr Kramer explained that the Pupil Premium Grant received from government is just under £10 million. This is allocated to schools and the school governing bodies along with the head teacher are responsible for deciding where best to use this money within their school and are accountable for this. The local authority holds high quality data and uses RAISEonline data which shows that Portsmouth

is continuing to make reasonable progress to narrow the gap.

Mr Harder circulated a short paper giving information of the role of local authority with regard to Pupil Premium (PP). He explained that school leaders must ensure that the details of spend and the impact on outcomes is publicly stated on their website. The local authority in its statutory role must ensure that outcomes in the city are improved for children. The LA also has a role in oversight, advice and sharing of best practice.

Role of the Local Authority

The local authority has a team of education officers who visit their schools regularly and during their visits challenge school leaders on effective use of the grant and advise on best practice from other schools both locally and nationally. A toolkit is available on the DFE website which highlights research from the Sutton Trust and others into the effectiveness of different interventions and the relevant value for money aspect.

The LA has initiated a PP programme for secondary schools within the city where the GCSE gap was second to bottom in the 'national league table' of 2013. This has involved a number of streams:

- Brokering additional resource from an external secondary education officer
- Facilitating and chairing a network of head teachers to work on PP
- Seconding a deputy head at a city Secondary School funded by the LA and schools to work across all secondary phase provision in sharing good practice,
- Hosting a workshop for all Secondary Heads with sub-regional lead HMI running a seminar on the priority of PP in school inspections (summer term 2013/14)
- Hosting a workshop for secondary and primary heads with the national PP Champion (Sir John Dunford) on 17 November 2014
- Having a lead Head teacher, Fiona Calderbank, to work alongside the Local Authority on this agenda as part of the seconded heads programme (primary).
- Re-focusing analyses from the Education Information Services Team on narrowing the PP gap.
- Attending regional / national conferences, for example the South East Regional Ofsted conference in March 2014 at which Sir Michael Wilshaw HMCI and other national speakers showed the gap for South East LAs and showcased those areas where gaps are being narrowed.
- Ensuring that there is a focus at the cluster level on narrowing the gap.

Impact of pupil premium

Mr Harder advised that the provisional 2014 data shows that the gap for FSM children, (which is the largest cohort for PP funding) at Key Stage 4 is improving and the gap has reduced from 30% to circa 23% this year. The target is to further reduce the gap to 15% by 2015 and the data shows that the LA is on track to meet this target. Overall standards have also risen with (provisionally) 51% of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSE's at A*-C including English and maths, compared to 48% last year.

The gap is also narrowing at KS2. For the combined measure of reading, writing and maths the gap was 26% in 2012, 24% in 2013 and provisional figures show this is now 21% for 2014.

The progress of PP eligible children between KS1 and KS2 is improving rapidly and they are catching up with non PP children. More children are making 3 levels of progress (above expected levels of progress) than ever before.

National data is due to be released on Thursday 24 October which will provide further context to GCSE performance and this data will be shared with the panel at the next meeting.

The following additional information was given in response to members' questions:

- Mr Harder advised that the conference on 17 November could be offered to members of the scrutiny panel and he would circulate the details to them in due course. Three representatives from each school would be invited and Fiona Calderbank advised that Councillor Dowling would be able to attend the conference as governor at Miltoncross and report back.
- There was a variation between schools in the city in terms of successes however once the national verified data was released this would give a clearer picture of the variation of successes in schools.

The head teachers present were then invited by the Chair to give a summary on how they are using PP in their school and how this had improved outcomes:

b) Sandra Gibb, Head Teacher St George's Beneficial School

Ms Gibb explained that her school was allocated £162,000 in pupil premium

grant for 2014/15. The number of pupils eligible for pupil premium fluctuates for 2014/15 there are 51.1% of pupils however when the census is reviewed this number increased to 53.8%. She advised that the majority of the funding was used to reduce class sizes and employing extra support staff to help in classes to help narrow the gap and accelerate progress in reading, writing and maths. Money was also spent on enrichment activities such as the sunrise breakfast club, sport and arts clubs and lunchtime activities. The school also subsidise educational visits for PP pupils to allow them take part in these. In addition there were a number of initiatives introduced to improve the wellbeing of children. This included the employment of a speech and language therapist to deliver programmes to the youngest children, emotional first aid training and a subsidy for sun setters to ensure the school offers after school child care with food so parents can access employment or education.

Ms Gibb gave further information on some of the enrichment activities the school offers. The Silent Movie Project and Film Noir Project produced high quality films. Following the project the school noted a significant improvement in the writing of children in year 5/6. She showed a video clip to the panel of some of the silent movie projects the pupils had produced.

c) Deamonn Hewett-Dale, Head Teacher The Flying Bull Academy

Mr Hewett-Dale advised that his school was allocated £286,000 in pupil premium grant for 2014/15 and half termly pupil progress meetings are held to assess the outcomes and the strategic direction. Mr Hewett-Dale advised that he reports termly to the governing body and will present a final report to the December full governing board meeting. There was 51.6% of the school population who qualified for pupil premium and when the census was reviewed this rose to 54.1%. In 2013/14 the school use the PP funding in the following ways:

- Extra teacher working across year 5 and year 6.
- Extra teacher in Year 2 with smaller groups in the morning and working with booster groups and reading recovery in the afternoon.
- Speech and language therapist for three days a week.
- Extra teaching assistant support in years 5 and 6.
- Full time attendance support worker.
- Continued Every Child a Reader (ECAR) accreditation and training.
- Fischer Family Trust intervention training and support.
- Better Reading Programme intervention training and support.
- Extra 0.6 teacher to allow pupil premium conferencing
- Catch up numeracy training and support
- Lunchtime and after school booster groups with year 6 teachers.
- Extra member of learning and pastoral team working with children who have barriers to learning.

He then outlined some of the outcomes achieved through PP grant:

- Above or at National Standards in reading, writing, PGS, maths and combined at key stage 2.
- Year 2 made above age related expected progress.
- Writing gap between pupil premium and non-pupil premium reduced in all year groups.
- Less speech and language delays entering reception year group this year due to early interventions in nursery.
- Improved attendance - Ofsted had raised concerns over attendance and this had improved over the last year and the persistent absentees had stopped.
- Reduced incidents of poor behaviour disrupting learning.
- Early intervention with children with poor behaviour.

Mr Hewett-Dale advised that the school used the LA's toolkit which had been very helpful. The school inform parents on what they are spending the PP grant on and some parents do respond to this. The school are innovative and responsive to new ways of helping children. One future initiative is to introduce a school radio station which will help children develop their listening and speaking skills.

d) Fiona Calderbank, Head Teacher Miltoncross School

Ms Calderbank advised that her school was allocated £327,800 in 2013/14. The gap was at 23% currently with 17% gap between PP pupils and non PP pupils in attainment. She circulated a diagram showing the four PP intervention strands: literacy, attendance, behaviour and progress which were key to the vision and values of the school. The impact of these strands was monitored so that if they do not work, changes can be made and new initiatives put in place. Bespoke plans are in place for different pupils based on their needs. Attendance is one of the key areas where the money is being spent as this is often an issue for PP pupils. An attendance officer currently employed part time and after Christmas this will increase to five days a week.

With regard to progress, pedagogy in lessons ensures that teachers know who the PP children are and they will spend longer marking their books and give these pupils more attention and this has made a difference for the entire cohort.

Questions

In response to questions from the panel the following points were clarified by the witnesses present:

- The chair asked whether it was correct to say that in secondary schools PP is tailored more towards individual PP pupils and Ms Calderbank confirmed this was the case. PP pupils were outperforming non PP pupils in Science. Mr Hewett-Dale advised that in his school there was blanket targeting so the money was used to improve outcomes for all pupils who are underachieving and not just those who are PP pupils. PP pupils were currently outperforming the non PP pupils in terms of progress. Ms Gibb said she also used the money to target all underachieving pupils. She said in her school pupil premium figures were turbulent but currently there were 78 English as an additional language (EAL) pupils and a large number of these were not PP children. A number of children at St George's School were from single parent families and do not qualify for PP. The school chose to use some of the PP funding to subsidise the three day sailing programme for these pupils to allow them to take part and develop new skills.
- There were some concerns by head teachers that the introduction of free school meals (FSM) would have an effect on the number of families registered for these and thus have an effect on the amount of PP a school receives. Ms Gibb said that her school has parent partners to help parents fill out the form. Mr Hewett-Dale said his school also offered this and in addition hold coffee mornings to encourage parents to register. If children coming into the school have older siblings in the school who are PP children the school will target these parents to register their other children for FSM and then go through the remainder of the new cohort to ensure that all those eligible register.
- Councillor Stagg said that when she was a teacher, she found that many parents living in deprived areas of the city had a lack of aspiration for their children and asked what was being done to encourage children to go onto further education and university. Ms Gibb said that her school encourages pupils to think about further education around the time that they are looking at secondary schools. Mr Hewett-Dale said that as Flying Bull is now part of the University of Chichester Academy Trust (CAT) that pupils hear university being used in daily communications and lecturers at the university work with the children so it was hoped this would give them aspirations of going on to university.
- The head teachers present all said that they share best practice on pupil premium spending with other school as this was vital for improvement. Ms Calderbank said that she had seconded her

Assistant Head to work with other secondary schools to work on the impact of PP and visits schools for half a day to see how they are using their PPG. Ideas have therefore been brought back to the school and conferences such as the one on 17th November are useful for schools to meet to share ideas. Mr Hewett-Dale added that he is working with another CAT School in another part of the country to share best practice.

- Mr Kramer advised that Sir Robin Bosher had asked whether Portsmouth aggregate data through its clusters.
- Mr Hewett-Dale said his school was part of the Heart of Portsmouth cluster and each school within the cluster is looking at ways of closing the gap. The Chair said this would be useful to use as a case study for the panel's report and asked whether Mr Hewett-Dale could share this information when the information was available.
- Education officers through their visits to schools challenge school leaders about narrowing the gap and how they are helping EAL pupils with progress.
- The head teachers said that support is needed to make sure that the cluster work continues on. It was felt that the FSM is a reasonable indicator for PP. The Ever 6 keeps consistency so may be a better measure rather than FSM.
- PP for LAC was difficult as it is often difficult to identify these children. Ms Gibb gave an example and said in her school there were only two receiving PP under this group however in reality there were many more but they were hard to track as they are constantly moving to various relatives etc.

The Chair expressed his thanks to all the witnesses for their contribution to their review.

33. Dates of Future Meetings (AI 5)

This was agreed at Monday 24 November at 7pm.

The meeting concluded at 8.05 pm.

Councillor Will Purvis
Chair