

DEVON EDUCATION FORUM (Devon's Schools Forum)

18 March 2015

Present:-

Schools Members

Primary School Headteachers

Mr A Dobson
Mr J Stone
Mr P Walker

Marwood Primary
Denbury Primary
Sidmouth CE Primary

Primary School Governors

Mrs A Blewett
Mr M Dobbins
Mrs P Furnival
Mrs M Wallis

Kings Nympton Primary
Exmouth Marpool Primary
Ivybridge, Woodlands Park Primary
Whimble Primary

Secondary School Headteachers

Mr D Chapman
Mr M Smith
Mr R Haring

The Dartmoor Federation
The Axe Valley CC
Ivybridge CC (*Academy member*)

Secondary School Governors

Mr I Courtney
Mr A Walmsley
Ms J Elson
Mr S Baber

The Dartmoor Federation **Chairman**
Exeter, St James
Exmouth CC (*Academy member*)
Chulmleigh Academy Trust
(*Academy substitute member*)

Special School Headteacher

Ms C May

Pathfield School

Non-Schools Members

Mrs B Alderson
Mrs G Rolstone

Teachers Consultative Committee
Early Years Private, Voluntary and Independent providers
(EY PVI)

Mrs M Beresford

EY PVI (*substitute member – no voting*)

Observers

Councillor J McInnes

Cabinet Member - Children, Schools & Skills

Apologies

Mr J Bishop
Mrs J Baker
Mrs T de Bernhart-Dunkin
Mrs G Brown
Mrs F Butler
Mr P Mantell
Mr M Shanks
Mrs V Skelton
Mr J Thorndyke

Broadclyst Primary (*Academy member*)
Primary Academies Trust (*Academy substitute member*)
16-19
Chestnut Nursery (*substitute member*)
Marland School
Exeter Diocesan Board of Education
Coombeshead CC (*Academy member*)
Schools Company North Devon Academy (*Academy member*)
Special schools (*substitute member*)

730 Minutes

DECISION:

that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2015 be signed as a correct record, subject to the addition of Mrs T de Bernhart-Dunkin 16-19 representative, to the list of members present.

731 Matters Arising from the Last Meeting and Report back on Issues Raised with Cabinet - Cross Service Update – School Crossing Patrols (minute 723)

DISCUSSION:

DAPH requested officers to advise schools that consideration of the withdrawal of LA funding for school crossing patrols had been deferred, rather than retracted, so that schools were aware they may need to plan for this in the longer term.

ACTION:

Head of Planning, Transportation & Environment (Simon Niles)

732 Membership

DISCUSSION:

Members noted that Devon Personalised Learning Service (Pupil Referral Unit) had converted to a multi Alternative Provision Academy wef 1 March 2015, with Mrs Vicky Skelton (Schools Company North Devon Academy) elected as representative.

733 Director of Public Health Update – Co-production of Emotional Psychological and Social Wellbeing Support for Children and Young People of School Age in Devon

DISCUSSION:

Members considered the report of the Director of Public Health (DEF/15/04) on this new service commissioned through Public Health Devon and schools in response to the identified gap in service provision for children and young people with emotional and behavioural problems who did not meet the threshold criteria for the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). This followed on from the 2013 Ofsted inspection of Devon's child protection arrangements, the Munro report and Devon's Early Help Strategy. The new service aimed to promote emotional wellbeing and resilience, prevent mental illness and improve early identification and intervention. The service was to be implemented in September 2015 following the current tendering/contracts process.

There had been extensive engagement with schools, providers and children & young people in developing the service. The school reference group included representatives from each school phase and Exeter University and had worked through consultation responses, service specification and tendering and would also have involvement in governance, monitoring and evaluation of the new service. Phase associations would also be approached to provide representatives for the governance board. Attention had focused on the 4/5 - 19 years age group as this was where the main gap had been identified, whilst ensuring there was an early years pathway into the primary sector.

Members welcomed the new service and work to date.

ACTION:

Director of Public Health (Emily Youngman)

734 Head of Education & Learning Update

DISCUSSION:

The Head of Education & Learning reported on informal feedback received on education related issues as part of the current unannounced 4 week Ofsted inspection into Children's services including child protection, fostering and adoption, Integrated Children's Services (ISB) and the Devon Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB).

The Head of Education & Learning also reported on Devon's comprehensive child non-attendance monitoring which included effective "Missing Monday" meetings. Details of children on temporary Devon part-time timetables were also circulated and it was important to ensure that too many children and young people did not drift. Part time timetable children data at 10 March 2015 breakdown by phase, gender, reasons (behaviour/emotional & mental health/physical) included 28 primary age children on part time timetable for an average of 13 months and 71 secondary age children for 2 ½ years, both phases higher for boys.

Ofsted "Pupils Missing Out on Education" (November 2013) and published report on LAs "The Sexual Exploiting of Children: It Couldn't Happen Here, Could It?" (November 2014) also highlighted highly vulnerable young people included within those not attending school/Children Missing Education.

See also minute 738, report DEF/15/07, Children Missing Education.

735 Finance Update

DISCUSSION:

The Forum considered the report of the Head of Education & Learning and County Treasurer (DEF/15/05).

The Forum also noted the respective minutes of the Schools Finance Group (SFG) of 4 March 2015.

The report (DEF/15/05) covered:-

- Month 10 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget monitoring position
- Early Years new provision set up funding criteria

Members noted month 10 DSG was forecast to be under spent by £8.02m, including £2.7m carry forward earmarked for growth fund and £2.7m also earmarked for early years.

However of particular concern was a forecast over spend of £522k against the de-delegated contingency budget for schools in financial difficulty and a further report would be brought back to both the Schools Finance Group and this Forum.

Nursery funding criteria (paragraph 2 of the report) proposals included:- a set up one-off lump sum of £10,000 payable two terms before opening for staffing and resources; diseconomy of scale costs paid when a unit first opened up to a maximum of the equivalent of 35% of full capacity at one session per day in the first term, funding over the next two terms on a sliding scale and no additional funding paid after term 3).

It was also noted that the County Treasurer had arranged for Local Learning Community funding to be identified separately within budgets and schools advised of different rates for new delegation elements (arising from SFG minute 9).

DECISION:

(a) that the month 10 DSG monitoring position and a further report to a future meeting on the forecast overspend be noted;

Vote: all phases maintained and academy, PVI

(b) that the Early Years new provision set-up and dis-economy funding criteria as set out in section 2 of the report be approved.

Vote: all phases maintained and academy, PVI

ACTION:

County Treasurer (John Holme, Karen Powlesland), (a) Forward Plan

736 Free School Meals During School Holidays

DISCUSSION:

The Forum considered the report of the Head of Education & Learning (DEF/15/06), discussing whether the LA or its partners should support families with children in food poverty who did not receive Free School Meals out of school.

The Head of Education & Learning also circulated a response from Exeter Food Hub members (community group) and it was noted that in just a 3 day period the Exeter food bank had fed a total of 4700 people, 1072 of whom were children. It was hoped to introduce meals eg as part of an activity/summer school and other ways that sought to avoid potential stigmatism.

Members gave examples of current good practice of schools, district councils etc.

Ms Gibbs, Public Health Devon reported it would support measures to address children in food poverty.

The Head of Education & Learning undertook to look further into issues members raised including:-

- current practice by schools (eg fundraising, vouchers)
- signposting local provision to raise public awareness
- disparity amongst geographical areas
- mapping schools putting on summer play schemes where a hot meal may be provided
- offer of assistance from Public Health/co-ordination of a group examining possibilities within current capacity and looking at gaps
- government lobbying
- involvement by phase associations.

DECISION: that the Head of Education & Learning investigate the above further and report back to a future meeting.

ACTION:

Head of Education & Learning (Sue Clarke/Andrew Brent), Forward Plan

737 Destinations for Young People in Devon (16-18 year olds)

DISCUSSION:

The Forum considered the report of the Head of Education & Learning (DEF/15/08) on:-

Current position of NEETs (Not in Education, Employment or Training) and destination data - Devon NEET improved over last 3 years, 2015 good compared to the national rate (Devon 4.2%, nationally 7%);

Apprenticeships - whilst in recent years take up had been good, there had now been a significant fall with a number of unfilled apprenticeship vacancies in Devon. Apprenticeship wage, transport and accommodation costs were a factor, particularly for young people in rural areas and for small Devon employers;

Vulnerable groups - whilst Children in Care (CiC) and teenage mothers were affected, the highest NEET volume was for Learners with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LLDD). Ofsted were targeting vulnerable groups and there was significant work taking place to ensure this group stayed engaged;

Supporting Transition - DCC with other SW LAs commissioned providers, with vulnerable groups targeted by DCC and young people supported in key stage 4 where there was a significant risk of becoming NEET in key stage 5.

Attainment - Devon results were comparable to statistical neighbours but short of the national average.

Members welcomed the early engagement with employers before year 9 GCSE option choices and schools would continue to engage with local employers but also confirmed there was a real difficulty for some young people accessing post 16 qualifications/apprenticeships in rural areas.

DECISION: that the report be noted.

ACTION: -

738 Children Missing Education (CME)

DISCUSSION:

The Forum received the report of the Head of Education & Learning (DEF/15/07) on the different strategies used to identify children most at risk within "Children Missing Education" and clarifying the difference between children who had education provision identified but may not be accessing it and "Children Missing Education." This also included monitoring, elective home education, traveller children, children awaiting new school/specialist placements, persistent absenteeism, part time timetables, child sexual exploitation and "Missing Monday" meetings.

DECISION: that the report be noted.

ACTION: -

739 South West Grid for Learning (SWGfL) Update

DISCUSSION:

DAPH reported on their latest communications with SWGfL regarding the share of funding for all schools when broadband provision transferred to SWGfL and the position for schools who could not afford to remain with SWGfL/were receiving poor internet coverage.

DAPH was now hopeful that there would be formal recognition by SWGfL that the funding had been intended for all schools and was continuing to pursue a resolution.

740 Standing (and other) Groups

(a) The Forum received the following minutes of its standing groups:-

(i) School Finance Group (SFG)

Minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2015 (considered under Finance Update minute 735 above).

(ii) Schools Organisation, Capital and Admissions (SOCA)

(replacing Schools Organisation and Policy Forum and the Local Admissions Forum)

Minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2015.

DISCUSSION:

SOCA issues raised about Free School Meals funding for nursery pupils would be considered by the School Finance Group.

ACTION:

County Treasurer (Karen Powlesland), Head of Education & Learning (Heidi Watson-Jones)

(b) Representations and progress from various standing and task & finish groups

Forum Proportionality wef September 2015 (Annual Review)

DISCUSSION:

It was noted that the Chairman and spokespersons had considered the January 2015 pupil census data to review membership proportionality on the Forum for the next academic year. As there had been no significant change in proportionality, no change in membership was recommended.

Casual vacancy and substitute member arrangements were also under review following the return to four yearly appointments, with further details to follow.

ACTION:

County Solicitor (Fiona Rutley)

741 Dates of Future Meetings

Meetings to commence at 10am at County Hall, Exeter (unless otherwise indicated):-

Wed 24 June 2015

Wed 21 Oct 2015

Mon 18 Jan 2016.

The meeting started at 10am and finished at 11.45 pm.

The Schools Forum web is www.devon.gov.uk/schoolsforum