

Devon Alternative Provision - Update

Report of the Head of Education and Learning

It is recommended that Scrutiny:

- Notes that Devon's Alternative Provision (AP) was formally re-brokered in November 2018;
- Notes the ongoing work to support improvement across the provision.

1. Background

- 1.1 At the meeting on 4th June 2018, Children's Scrutiny received an update on the current position on Devon's Alternative Provision (AP) and the intention for the provision to re-brokered to a new provider, the report can be found at:
<https://democracy.devon.gov.uk/documents/g2856/Public%20reports%20pack%2004th-Jun-2018%2014.15%20Childrens%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf?T=10>
- 1.2 At the time of writing, the new provider was not known but a decision was made in the summer to re-broker to Wave Multi Academy Trust (MAT), a Cornwall based provider of Alternative Provision. Wave would take over the running of the provision on November 1st,2019. The provider has seven AP Schools in Cornwall, five are Ofsted rated good and two outstanding, three have recently been inspected under the new Ofsted Framework. Details on the Wave MAT can be found at:
<https://get-information.schools.service.gov.uk/Groups/Group/Details/2067#list>
- 1.3 In summer term 2018, Ofsted inspected provision in Dartington and Exeter; both provisions were judged inadequate with safeguarding ineffective. This was in addition to a similar judgement at the provision in North Devon earlier in the year.

2. Current Provision

- 2.1 In September 2018, Devon agreed a new commissioning agreement with the interim Board at SchoolsCompany Trust but the commission had principally been negotiated with Wave; including a novation agreement upon re-brokerage. Wave have operationally been running the provision from the start of the academic year.

2.3 The focus of the commissioning agreement reflected all three schools' Ofsted inadequate judgements, all with safeguarding ineffective.

2.4 On 1st November 2018, the three AP schools transferred to Wave Academy and have been renamed:

Dartington -	River Dart Academy
Exeter -	Stansfield Academy
North -	Shoreline Academy

These have been described as 'Fresh Start' Academies and as such do not carry the previous judgements and are unlikely to be subject to further Ofsted inspection for at least 2 years. The Local Authority and Wave fully recognise that the loss of the inadequate judgement does not in any way remove the need for significant school improvement which will be the overarching priority for the short to medium term, in particular, safeguarding.

2.5 There has been a significant amount of work since September from the Local Authority and Wave including:

- LA commissioned safeguarding audits in all three schools with follow-up visits and action planned;
- The MAT has successfully requested to move the commissioned places for learners unable to attend school due to medical conditions into a new separate school rather than sitting across the three AP schools. The school will be known as Torlands and have provision across the County;
- The Local Authority and MAT have undertaken a complete roll review for all learners and at the time of writing are planning a third review of learners on roll with statutory plans as detailed in the SEN Strategic Review;
- The MAT has taken occupancy of the former youth centre at Buddle Lane, Exeter, and is expecting this provision to be operational during this term to support increased numbers, school improvement and reintegration;
- The MAT have restructured their school leadership including the appointment of an Executive Principal for Devon AP as well as Medical Provision;
- MAT-wide safeguarding training

It has been clear that Wave are already making progress to improve Devon's AP offer which has been evidenced through roll reviews and other audits.

3. Commissioning Arrangements 2019 onwards

3.1 The recommissioning of AP provision for the next academic year has commenced although it is proposed the agreement will be for more than a year with appropriate break clauses. The main focus of the agreement will be:

- Moving all schools to good or outstanding and ensuring that safeguarding remains effective;
- An increase in successful reintegration of children back into appropriate provision, in particular those with statutory plans or successful transitions either into secondary school or into further education, employment and training;
- Increasing the educational offer and outcomes;
- Development of an outreach offer to support schools in reducing exclusion.

Student progress and access to full time education remains an overarching priority.

4. Conclusion

4.1 The re-brokerage of the Devon's AP to Wave has had a positive start and there has already been improvement across the provision. However, the legacy issues inherited by Wave will take some time to be fully addressed in a sector that remains under significant pressure due to the numbers and need of learners requiring AP.

Dawn Stabb

Head of Education and Learning

Electoral Divisions: All

Cabinet Member for [Children, Schools and Skills](#): Councillor James McInnes

Chief Officer for Childrens Services: Jo Olsson

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972: LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Contact for Enquiries:

Dawn Stabb, Head of Education and Learning

Email: dawn.stabb@devon.gov.uk

Tel No: 01392 383000