

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Children and Young People Select Committee held in the Conference Room, County Hall, Usk on Thursday 15th April 2014 at 10.00a.m.

PRESENT: County Councillor R.P. Jordan (Chairman)

County Councillors: D. Blakebrough, P.S. Farley, D.W.H. Jones, P. Jones, S. Jones and M. Powell.

County Councillor E.J. Hacket Pain attended the meeting by invitation of the Chairman.

ADDED MEMBERS:

Voting:

Mrs. S. Ingle-Gillis (Parent Governor)

Non-Voting:

Mr. K. Plow

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms. S. McGuinness	-	Chief Officer, Children and Young People
Mrs. S. Randall-Smith	-	Children and Young People Directorate
Mr. M. Lloyd	-	Children and Young People Directorate
Ms. H. Ilett	-	Scrutiny Manager
Mr. R. Williams	-	Democratic Services Officer

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.- Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors P.R. Clarke, A.C. Watts and P. Watts and also from Revd. Dr. S. James (Church in Wales).

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.- County Councillors D. Blakebrough, P.S. Farley, R.P. Jordan and M. Powell declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest under the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of references made to schools under Minutes 3, 4 and 5 as they are School Governors.

Mrs. S. Ingle-Gillis (Parent Governor) declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest under the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of references made to schools under Minutes 3, 4 and 5 as she is a School Governor.

**Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Children and Young People Select
Committee dated 15th April 2014 - continued**

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

3.- The minutes of the Children and Young People Select Committee dated 14th February 2014 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

DISCUSSION WITH THE CHIEF OFFICER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE FOLLOWING THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING WITH MONMOUTHSHIRE'S SECONDARY HEAD TEACHERS ON 14th FEBRUARY 2014

4.- Having met with Monmouthshire's four secondary head teachers on 14th February 2014, the Select Committee met with the Chief Officer for Children and Young People and the following points were noted:

- Mounon House School did not currently have access to Broadband. It was noted that it would cost between £12,000 and £14,000 to install Broadband at Mounon House. The Chief Officer for Children and Young People stated that she was aware of the importance of having quality I.T. Provision for students with Additional Learning Needs.
- Mounon House School was currently a school for boys. There were quality in house resources located within the County that could be used to provide Special Educational Needs / Additional Learning Needs support to all children within Monmouthshire.
- The Chief Officer for Children and Young People stated that firstly, it was necessary to ensure that the service being provided at Mounon House School, as well as all other schools within Monmouthshire, was good enough. A review was currently being undertaken in respect of all schools within Monmouthshire.
- A review of Additional Learning Needs provision was being undertaken. On 15th May 2014 a consultation event was being held in respect of Additional Learning Needs provision. A strategic report would then be presented to the Select Committee in due course.
- The review will challenge and improve Additional Learning Needs Provision and will ensure equality across the County.
- The 21st Century Schools Programme will address the need for joined up services, e.g., support for pupils with Additional Learning Needs. It was intended to federate these skills countywide.
- There will be no gender specific educational provision under the 21st Century Schools Programme.
- Improving Additional Learning Needs provision was a high priority.

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Children and Young People Select Committee dated 15th April 2014 - continued

- In response to a Select Committee Member's question, the Chief Officer for Children and Young People stated that pupils' transition from primary school to secondary school was a crucial time for these children and therefore the Directorate was focussing on improving this pupil transition.
- The Chief Officer for Children and Young People stated that continuous maintenance was being provided to ensure that children received the best education. Young people were now receiving a challenging curriculum.
- Schools were being challenged to achieve best value.
- In response to a Select Committee Member's question regarding support for schools, the Chief Officer for Children and Young People stated that through challenge, schools were being supported. Such support included school improvement provision, financial planning and grounds maintenance.
- Head teachers were now being held to account.
- The Education Achievement Service provides constant support to Monmouthshire's schools.
- The Authority provides training for Monmouthshire's schools.
- It was the responsibility of schools to identify the support that they required.
- The Education Achievement Service provided the school improvement service within Monmouthshire's Schools. The challenge was vigorous.
- The relationship between the Authority and Monmouthshire's schools was one of mutual trust and respect.
- In response to issues raised by the Head Teachers at the Select Committee meeting on 14th February 2014, the Chief Officer for Children and Young People stated that disaffected children, parenting skills and children receiving free school meals were all linked and the Authority was looking to support these children through their families.
- In response to a Select Committee Member's question regarding families that were just above the threshold of receiving free school meals, the Chief Officer for Children and Young People stated that she would liaise with the head teachers to discuss ways in which these families might be supported.
- Parenting skills had been established across all schools within Monmouthshire.

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Children and Young People Select Committee dated 15th April 2014 - continued

- It was noted that the Education Achievement Service had further improvements to make but developments had been made with regard to its business plan.

It had been beneficial in meeting with the head teachers of the four secondary schools within Monmouthshire.

We therefore resolved that the Scrutiny Manager would liaise with the head teachers with a view to meeting with them individually within their respective schools later in the year.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2013

5.- We received a summary of the performance of pupils at the end of Key Stages 4 and 5 and groups of pupils across all age groups and the targets set for 2014.

Select Committee members were provided with the following information:

Past Performance up to and including 2012

Key Stages 4 and 5:

- Performance at the end of Key Stage 4 between 2007 and 2012 has been at, or just above, the all Wales average for all indicators. Despite the sustained improvement, Monmouthshire's overall ranking has fluctuated between 3rd and 18th position across these indicators during this period. The rate of improvement in Monmouthshire over the last five years has been slower than Wales as a whole.
- In Key Stage 5, Performance for the Level 3 indicator has fluctuated significantly from 2007, peaking at 97% in 2012. Monmouthshire's performance has been lower than the all Wales average for four out of the last seven years.

Gender Performance:

- Historically, the performance of boys and girls in the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2 has been consistently above the Wales average since 2007. Girls in the Foundation Phase have outperformed boys for the last two years in Language, Literacy and Communication (LLC) and Personal, Social Development, Wellbeing and Cultural Development (PSDSWCD) and boys have outperformed girls at the higher level in mathematics. In Key Stage 2, girls have consistently outperformed boys in English at the expected and higher levels. The performance of boys in relation to girls has improved over the last three years. As in Foundation Phase, boys do better than girls in mathematics at the higher level.
- At the end of Key Stage 3, girls have outperformed boys consistently in all three core subjects at the expected level since 2007. However, the differential in attainment has reduced over the last four years. Similarly, in Key Stage 4, girls

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Children and Young People Select Committee dated 15th April 2014 - continued

have outperformed boys in the Level 2 including English and mathematics since 2007, with the exception of 2011, when outcomes for boys and girls were the same. The performance of boys in Monmouthshire has been consistently above that in Wales since 2007. However, girls were below the all Wales average in 2011.

Performance of Pupils eligible for Free School Meals (e-FSM):

- The performance of e-FSM pupils in Monmouthshire between 2010 and 2012 has improved steadily and has been at, or above the e-FSM all Wales averages in the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 3. In Key Stages 2 and 4 during the same period, the performance of e-FSM pupils has been at, or below the e-FSM all Wales average, with the exception of 2012 when Key Stage 4 was above.
- Non FSM pupils in Monmouthshire have consistently outperformed e-FSM pupils between 2010 and 2012. The differential in performance between the two groups has widened as pupils have progressed through the Key Stages reaching up to 42% at the end of Key Stage 4 in 2011.

Performance of Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL):

- The performance of pupils with EAL has been collated from 2010 for the Foundation Phase and Key Stages 2 and 3 and from 2011 for Key Stage 4. The number of EAL pupils in Monmouthshire is relatively small historically and therefore there are some variations between cohorts. Generally, the performance of pupils with EAL has been broadly similar to that of all pupils across the authority in the Foundation Phase and Key Stages 2, 3 and 4.

Performance of Looked After Children (LAC):

- The performance of LAC has been historically inconsistent in Monmouthshire over the last three years. The overall outcomes reflect the fact that numbers of LAC are relatively small and vary significantly between cohorts.
- Between 2010 and 2012, performance of LAC in Monmouthshire was significantly below the local authority average in Key Stages 2, 3 and 4 with the exception of 2012 where performance of LAC was the same in Key Stage 2.

Targets and Quartile Positions:

- The process for setting school targets has been inconsistent across schools in Monmouthshire. Only a few schools used individual pupil targets as the basis for setting overall school targets. As a result, school targets have not been an effective driver to raise standards in individual schools and across the local authority.
- The number of schools in the lowest benchmark quartiles has reduced consistently over the past four years for the Foundation Phase Indicator and Key

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Children and Young People Select Committee dated 15th April 2014 - continued

Stage 2 Core Subject Indicator. However, in Key Stages 3 and 4 at least 50% of schools have been in the lowest quartile for the last four years.

Performance at the end of academic year 2013

Key Stages 4 and 5:

- In 2013, Key Stage 4 outcomes for all indicators, except the Core Subject Indicator (CSI) and Level 1, are higher than in 2012. However, the increases from the previous year are lower than across Wales as a whole. Performance at Level 1 is 0.33% lower than 2012 and 0.66% lower for the CSI. Outcomes for Level 1 and Level 2 fell below the all Wales average for the first time in 2013.
- At 94.7%, performance in Key Stage 5 in 2013 is 2% lower than in 2012 and as a result, is below the all Wales average.

Gender Performance:

- The gender pattern of performance in 2013 is consistent with that in previous years. However, the differential between the performance of boys and girls in Monmouthshire has reduced in all Key Stages compared to 2012 and is at its smallest since 2009 in Key Stages 2 and 3.

Performance of Pupils eligible for Free School Meals (e-FSM):

- In 2013, the performance of e-FSM pupils is above the Wales average in the Foundation Phase and Key Stages 2, 3 and 4.
- The differential between the performance of e-FSM pupils and non FSM pupils has decreased steadily and is now below the all Wales average in the Foundation Phase and in Key Stages 2 and 3. There has been a significant reduction in the differential at the end of Key Stage 4 however; it still remains above the all Wales average.

Performance of Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL):

- In 2013, the performance of pupils with EAL is lower than the authority overall in the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2 and above in Key Stage 3. Performance in Key Stage 4 is significantly below the authority for the first time in three years.

Performance of Looked After Children (LAC):

- 2013 data is not available until September 2014.

Targets and Quartile Positions:

- All schools follow rigorous procedures to set individual pupil level targets which accurately inform whole school targets. Targets for e-FSM pupils are also set within the context of school. Progress towards these targets are monitored during

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Children and Young People Select Committee dated 15th April 2014 - continued

the year by individual schools and challenged by the Education Achievement Service (EAS) and the local Authority to ensure that schools are on track and to identify schools requiring further support.

- In 2013, Monmouthshire outcomes in the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2 closely matched agreed targets. Outcomes at the end of Key Stage 3 are between 3% and 5% below the agreed targets. Similarly in Key Stage 4, overall outcomes are between 3% and 6% below the agreed targets.
- The number of schools in the lowest quartile increased to 12 in 2013 in the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2. However, the number above the median increased by 2 schools.
- In Key Stage 3 the number of schools above the median rose to 2, the highest since 2010. There are no schools in the highest quartile in 2013.
- At least two out of the four secondary schools in Monmouthshire are in the lowest quartile for all indicators with the exception of the Level 1 indicator where all schools are in the lowest quartile. There is only one Monmouthshire school in the highest quartile for one indicator which is the Core Subject Indicator.

Future Performance

Key Stages 4 and 5:

- Although Monmouthshire's performance is higher for the majority of indicators, the overall rankings are not consistent with the free school meal ranking of third or above. All Key Stage 4 indicator rankings have fallen in the last year, most significantly in Level 1 and Level 2 where Monmouthshire is ranked 18th and 16th respectively.
- In order for Monmouthshire to be ranked 3rd or above for all indicators, overall performance would need to be above 62% for Level 2 including English and mathematics and the Core Subject Indicator (CSI), at or above 83% for Level 2 and, at or above 97% for Level 1.
- Key Stage 5 is ranked 20th for Level 3 when compared to all other authorities in Wales and is well below the expected ranking of 3rd position in line with the free school meal ranking.

Gender Performance:

- There should be no differential in the performance of boys and girls in Monmouthshire across all phases and subjects.

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Children and Young People Select Committee dated 15th April 2014 - continued

Performance of Pupils Eligible for Free School Meals (e-FSM):

- The differential in attainment between e-FSM pupils and non FSM pupils should be consistently well below the all Wales average and within a 5% differential overall.

Performance of Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL):

- The performance of pupils with EAL should continue to be broadly similar to that of all pupils across the authority in all phases wherever possible.

Performance of Looked After Children (LAC):

- Performance of LAC in Monmouthshire should be at least above the all Wales average and in line with individual potential.

Targets and Quartiles:

- The process of setting individual pupil targets and tracking pupil progress should be embedded across all schools in Monmouthshire. These processes should inform the strategic direction of schools and become an integral part of the process of school improvement. Targets set by schools should be suitably challenging to secure on-going improvement.
- The majority of Monmouthshire's schools should consistently be in the upper middle and highest FSM benchmark quartiles for all indicators.

Actions to achieve future performance

In order to secure the improvements Monmouthshire needs to achieve the following actions are being taken by the local Authority:

- Working with the EAS to strengthen the leadership of learning at all levels, embed school-based teaching and learning programmes and reduce the variation within and between schools.
- Building the capacity of schools to meet a wider range of pupils needs in partnership with the EAS.
- Increasing the scrutiny of school targets by the EAS, local Authority and Members.
- Identifying schools causing concern at an early stage. As a result, appropriate support and challenge is provided by the Educational Achievement Service (EAS) and the local Authority. Where appropriate, robust intervention plans are drawn up and implemented.

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Children and Young People Select Committee dated 15th April 2014 - continued

- Monitoring and reporting progress against intervention plans at regular intervals through Chief Officer and Cabinet Member meetings with schools to evaluate progress and provide additional challenge.
- Evoking powers of intervention where schools are judged to fail to make sufficient progress if necessary.
- Identifying common priorities for the EAS and Monmouthshire County Council that align across the South East Wales Consortium whilst reflecting the needs of the county.
- Monitoring the impact of the EAS literacy and numeracy teams are impacting on end of Key Stage standards.
- Ensuring that schools embed individual pupil tracking process, including for e-FSM pupils, and monitoring the impact on outcomes for pupils and quartile performance.
- Ensuring that EAS System Leaders provide a high level of challenge to schools by regularly monitoring the quality and consistency of this challenge.
- Scrutinising school use of the School Effectiveness Grant (SEG), the Welsh in Education Grant (WEG) and Pupil Deprivation Grant (PDG), grants in partnership with the EAS, to ensure the additional grant funding is appropriately linked to School Improvement Plans to accelerate the learning for pupils who face the challenge of poverty.
- Continuing to ensure that the range of data provided to schools and Governing Bodies is accessible and meaningful.
- Providing further training to ensure that schools have the capacity to effectively use data to drive school improvement.
- Continuing to increase and review the range of data provided to enable Members to challenge schools and officers appropriately.

Having received the report, the following points were noted:

- In response to a Select Committee Member's question regarding staff grievances, the Chief Officer for Children and Young People stated that there has been an increase in the number of disciplinary and capability cases. However, it was noted that Human Resources (H.R.) policies can hinder the development of these processes. H.R. Staff have been informed accordingly.
- This was not specific to Monmouthshire but was a Countrywide issue.
- It was noted that from September 2013 all schools were required to use individual pupils' data for target setting purposes. However, not all schools were currently doing this. From September 2014, this will be rectified with all schools

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Children and Young People Select Committee dated 15th April 2014 - continued

taking part. Forensic targeting will be achieved and it is anticipated that within two years improvements in pupils' performance will be noticeable. Schools will be able to see progress being made in all subjects year on year. This data will be shared across Monmouthshire's schools.

- Schools will work more closely together via school to school support which will be a bespoke process depending on which schools will be working together.
- The school to school support will be provided via a national model based on the London Challenge and is a powerful driver in improving schools' standards.
- In order to improve the transition for pupils from the primary sector to the secondary sector, teachers from secondary schools were going into primary schools to ensure the consistency of marking was maintained via the transition.
- It was noted that some of the percentage data contained within the School Performance Report 2013 was misleading due to the actual numbers involved being so small. It was considered that the actual numbers, as well as the percentage figures, should be included on future reports.
- Monmouthshire County Council should be aiming to be well above the Welsh average in the coming years with regard to school performance data.
- The next update report will be in the Autumn 2014.

We resolved to receive the report and noted its content.

The meeting ended at 11.21a.m.