

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
Minutes of the meeting of the Internal Monitoring Board
held at County Hall, Usk on Wednesday 5th February 2014 at 5.00pm

PRESENT: County Councillor P.A. Fox (Chairman)
County Councillors: D. Batrouni, D. Blakebrough L. Guppy and R.P. Jordan

ALSO PRESENT: County Councillor E.J. Hackett Pain

INVITED GUESTS

Mr. J. Morgan - Monmouthshire Recovery Board
Ms. J. Jones - Monmouthshire Recovery Board

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr. P. Matthews: Chief Executive
Ms. S. McGuinness: Chief Officer, Children & Young People
Mr. W. McLean: Head of Strategic Partnerships
Mr. R. Williams: Democratic Services Officer

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

3. MINUTES

We received and noted the minutes of the Internal Monitoring Board dated 17th December 2013.

4. UPDATE ON SCHOOL TARGETS AND FOLLOW-UP MEETINGS

The Head of Strategic Partnerships informed the Board that a stocktaking exercise had been undertaken on 6th January 2014 with the Head Teachers of Monmouthshire's four secondary schools in which schools' performance and target setting was discussed.

Each of the four schools are expecting to see significant improvements in the key measure of Level 2 (including English and Mathematics) at Key Stage 4 this summer which is pleasing.

It was noted that the Children and Young People Select Committee will be meeting the four Head Teachers on 14th February 2014 to discuss the schools' performances.

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5. POST INSPECTION ACTION PLAN – UPDATE ON PROGRESS

The Board was provided with the latest information in respect of the Post Inspection Action Plan (PIAP). The following information was noted:

The Head of Strategic Partnerships outlined the progress of the four work streams, namely:

- Safeguarding
- Standards and Challenge
- Corporate arrangements
- Section 'B' (Additional Learning Needs (ALN) & Wellbeing)

Having received the Post Inspection Action Plan, the following points were noted:

Safeguarding

Current Status – Between Amber/Green and Green - Risk staying the same since the last report.

The Board was informed that in depth information from Estyn would be available shortly following Estyn's interim monitoring visit of Monmouthshire County Council's Safeguarding provision of children in education.

The finalised Safeguarding Policy will be presented to Council in March 2014.

Standards and Challenge

Current Status – Between Amber/Red and Amber/Green - Risk staying the same since the last report.

Changes since the last report:

Key Stage 4:

- Performance has increased in Level 2 including English and Mathematics (Level 2 inclusive), remained the same in Level 2, Level 1 and capped points but declined in the Core Subject Indicator.
- The rate of improvement for all indicators is faster across Wales than in Monmouthshire.
- Monmouthshire is ranked between 3 and 9 places lower than in 2012 when compared with the rest of Wales.
- Overall, the differential in attainment between boys and girls is smaller than in 2012. However, the differential remains greater than the all Wales average for all indicators.
- The difference in performance between Free School Meals and non-Free School Meals pupils reduced in Level 2, Level 1 and the Core Subject

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Indicator and stayed the same in the Level 2 inclusive when compared to 2012.

- Differential in attainment between Free School Meals and non-Free School Meals remained significant in Level 2. Level 1, capped points and science when compared to Wales as a whole.

Key Stage 5:

- The number of pupils entering Level 3 qualifications in Monmouthshire was similar to 2012.
- 94.7% of pupils entered gained Level 3; this is 2% below the Wales average.
- The performance of boys and girls is broadly similar although more boys than girls were entered for exams.

Other targets:

- Targets set and scrutinised by the local Authority.
- Aggregated targets for Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2 match local Authority targets. Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 targets are above local Authority projected targets.
- Targets agreed with the Education Achievement Service would place Monmouthshire 3rd or above in all Wales ranking by 2015.
- Secondary Stocktake has taken place with the local Authority and the Education Achievement Service.
- Regular monitoring of progress against intervention plans implemented.

Next Period:

- Secondary Stocktake with Members, February 14th 2014.
- Present Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 Performance Report to Members.
- Complete introduction and implementation of pupil tracking database.
- Complete Education Achievement Service commissioning evaluation.

Slippage and remedial action:

- Variation in the quality of teaching has not moved forward as expected and will form part of the changes necessary to fully implement the National Model for School improvement.
- All schools have recovery plans in place.

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Issues or concerns:

- Performance in Key Stage 4 has not improved at the same rate as other key stages. Monmouthshire's Key Stage 4 ranking in Wales overall has declined from 2012.
- School Secure is now working.
- Further work required to fully address clarity around grant procedures and accountability with the Education Achievement Service.
- In a small number of recent school inspections, overall Education Achievement Service category for intervention and support did not match Estyn's judgements.
- Schools with deficit budgets at the end of quarter 2 reporting have increased by 2 schools.

Having received the report, the following points were noted:

- Broad interventions were being introduced via the Education Achievement Service such as literacy and numeracy support whereby teachers were being upskilled in these areas.

Corporate Arrangements

Current Status – Between Amber/Green and Green – Risk staying the same since the last report.

Changes since the last report:

- The Head of Service post has been declined by the applicant. A redistribution of roles was being undertaken. A management post will be appointed for responsibility of Joint Assessment Families / Team Around Family (JAFF/TAF), Poverty Agenda, Social Services link with commissioning, Project Management for Additional Learning Needs review.
- Ffynon Performance Management System training has been rescheduled. The Authority is currently reviewing the future Performance Management system.
- The Chief Officer's three Year Report to be delayed until May 2014 to allow for Directorate Service plans to be completed in line with the corporate improvement timetable and the completion of the South East Wales Consortium (SEWC) business plan.
- The Children and Young People Select Committee to receive the Quarter 3 performance report.
- The new Performance Management System will not be fully operational within the expected times.

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Section 'B' (Additional Learning Needs & Wellbeing)

Current Status – Inclusion - Between Amber/Green and Green – Risk reducing.

Additional Learning Needs – Between Amber/Red & Amber/Green - Risk reducing.

Changes since the last report:

- The processes for Statementing and Steering have been clarified and are more focused and include Key Stakeholders (SNAP and Schools).
- The strategic review of Additional Learning Needs was underway beginning with a review of policies and gathering of information.
- Education Psychologists completed Early Bird Plus training in January 2014.
- A Working Party has been established (2 meetings held). Reviewed and updated statutory letters to parents, permission forms, information sharing leaflet (Special Educational Needs and Education Psychologist Service) and Statement Appendix A.
- Schools have been consulted with regard to interventions and computer program being written at the moment.
- Person Centre Plan (PCP) and Individual Development Plan (IDP) training has been completed by the local Authority (Education Psychologist Service, Specific Learning Difficulties, Inclusion and Additional Learning Needs) and pilot schools. Roll out to schools by cluster area, 1 held.
- Schools identified and training to be carried out in March 2014.
- Secondary Fixed Term Exclusion in Autumn Term has fallen from 213.5 days to 64.5 days, a fall of 69.7%.
- Primary Fixed Term Exclusion in Autumn Term are just below last year's level, building on the fall of the previous year.
- The Education Achievement Service has changed the categorisation of the Pupil Referral Service from one requiring intensive support to one which requires sustained intervention which reflects the improvements made.
- In September 2013 the Bullying Prevention Policy was revised to include more information and guidance on cyber bullying and identifies links to the draft Monmouthshire County Council E Safety guidance.

The new policy guidance requires that schools use an anonymous e form to report all one off discriminatory incidents and bullying. Since the updated guidance has been circulated in June 2013 there have been four racial incidents in schools reported to the local authority. Local Authority officers have discussed all of these incidents with schools and are satisfied that policy has been followed and that sufficient follow up work has taken place. Since

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June 2013 no incidents of bullying have been reported. However, the local Authority has identified an ICT issue and is in the process of rectifying this problem. The County Council Safeguarding Survey, conducted by Monmouthshire Youth Service, highlighted concerns of young people around cyber bullying and this is being looked at by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and Bullying sub group to develop a consistent approach and training for all staff and to ensure support is available for young people who feel subjected to inappropriate behaviour or bullying. The Youth Service, together with the safeguarding unit, will present findings to the council, the Local Service Board and the Regional Safeguarding Board.

- Attendance in the autumn term has risen in both primary and secondary sectors. Data is now available at a whole school level for all pupils and pupils with Free School Meals. Vulnerable groups are also tracked and any issues promptly addressed by Education Welfare Service.
- At the end of the Autumn Term, Primary attendance figures were as follows:

Primary	Attendance	Authorised	Unauthorised
All	95.86	3.83	0.3
Free School Meals	93.5	6	0.5

- Free School meals was within 2.4% differential target and secondary attendance figures were:

Secondary	Attendance	Authorised	Unauthorised
All	94.48	4.8	0.68
Free School Meals	75% of secondary school's FSM is within the 4.3% differential compared to 25% last year		

- STATs 2 (Welsh Government Report summarising Additional Learning Needs / Special Educational Needs at an authority level) to be run 6th February 2014, data to be available on Monday 10th February, 2014.
- 2 clusters training sessions will be completed by 18 March 2014.
- Early Bird Plus Pupils to be identified by Health through appropriate referral system, to be run out this term.
- A representative body of Additional Learning Needs Officers to support the Autistic Spectrum Disorder Information Day for parents to be held on 15th February 2014.

6. ESTYN MONITORING VISIT - SAFEGUARDING

The Board received and noted the self –evaluation form for inspection Safeguarding and Child Protection in Local Authority Education Services for Children and Young People (LAESCYP).

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The Board was also informed that Estyn was currently undertaking an interim monitoring visit of Monmouthshire County Council's Safeguarding provision of children in education. Members, Officers and focus groups were being met.

Feedback from Estyn is promising with the County Council's progress being evident. A formal written response from Estyn will be available shortly.

7. REQUESTS FOR THE NEXT MONMOUTHSHIRE RECOVERY BOARD AND ASSOCIATED AGENDA FOR 18th FEBRUARY 2014

We received and noted the agenda for the meeting of the Monmouthshire Recovery Board which is being held at County Hall, Usk on 18th February 2014, commencing at 9.30am.

The meeting ended at 6.40pm.