

## COUNTY FORUM: Autumn Term 2016

### SUMMARY REPORT

Meeting: **County Forum Meeting** comprising County Consultative Committee and East Sussex Governors' Representative Group (ESGRG)

Date: 12<sup>th</sup> October 2016

Venue: County Hall, Lewes

Present: Cllr Nick Bennett (Chair), Richard Sage (RS), Julie Dougill (JD), Matthew Jones (MJ), Geoff Lucas (GL), Monica Whitehead (MW), Graham Pirt (GP), Denise Kong (DK), Fiona Wright (FW), Melanie Saunders (MS), Cllr Galley.

Apologies: Cllr Forward, Jane McCarthy-Penman, Patricia Grey.

Item	Decisions and Outcomes	Action																																		
1.	<p><b>Apologies for Absence</b> Apologies were received and noted as above.</p>																																			
2.	<p><b>Declaration of Interest</b> Disclosures by all members present of personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the member regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct.</p>																																			
3.	<p><b>Minutes of previous County Forum Meeting – 29<sup>th</sup> June 2016</b> The minutes were noted as a true record.</p> <p>The Spring and Summer 2016 Area Meeting attendance figures were noted as below:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Area</th> <th colspan="2">Total number of governors attending</th> <th colspan="2">Total number of schools represented</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Spring 2016</th> <th>Summer 2016</th> <th>Spring 2016</th> <th>Summer 2016</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Eastbourne</td> <td>14</td> <td>13</td> <td>14</td> <td>11</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hastings/Bexhill</td> <td>12</td> <td>24</td> <td>10</td> <td>16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lewes</td> <td>20</td> <td>27</td> <td>16</td> <td>17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Uckfield</td> <td>15</td> <td>16</td> <td>15</td> <td>13</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTALS</td> <td>61</td> <td>80</td> <td>55</td> <td>57</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Area	Total number of governors attending		Total number of schools represented		Spring 2016	Summer 2016	Spring 2016	Summer 2016	Eastbourne	14	13	14	11	Hastings/Bexhill	12	24	10	16	Lewes	20	27	16	17	Uckfield	15	16	15	13	TOTALS	61	80	55	57	
Area	Total number of governors attending		Total number of schools represented																																	
	Spring 2016	Summer 2016	Spring 2016	Summer 2016																																
Eastbourne	14	13	14	11																																
Hastings/Bexhill	12	24	10	16																																
Lewes	20	27	16	17																																
Uckfield	15	16	15	13																																
TOTALS	61	80	55	57																																

	<p>Out of 138 Governing Bodies of Maintained Schools, 55 were represented. This indicates 40% of Governing Bodies attending Area Meetings.</p> <p>Please note that this figure does not take into account governors who may be at more than one school, therefore the number of Governing Bodies reached could be higher.</p>	
4.	<p><b>Academies Update – Fiona Wright</b></p> <p>Since the last County Forum, there has been a central meeting for Headteachers, looking at the direction of travel. The LA is moving back from school improvement to drive school to school improvement. There will be a raft of information sessions over the next year. The first round of meetings looked at how schools can work together. The next round of meetings will offer specific advice around legal matters. Terms 3 and 4 will look at marketplace sessions and Terms five and six will look at individual schools,</p>	
5.	<p><b>EIPs – Melanie Saunders</b></p> <p>The NGA document about EIPs answers a lot of questions governors may have. The direction of travel is that the LA will reduce their involvement in school improvement in favour of school to school support in Educational Improvement Partnerships. In the early days, a number of schools converted on their own. Now schools must convert in groups. The main benefits of working together are curriculum cover, teacher recruitment and overcoming challenges with finance and budgets.</p> <p>EIPs will be working in supported autonomy. They aim to drive up standards and improve education. Whereas schools in the past have been in competition with each other, they are now increasingly working together. In areas such as phonics moderation, EIPs are working. In other areas such as the attainment of Free School Meals, there is still work to be done and this has been highlighted. EIPs will have the capacity to lead improvement.</p> <p>EIPs are not legally binding, but they are held to account. They have a shared budget and can share staff.</p> <p>Questions for Governors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do good schools suffer when they support weaker schools?</li> <li>• Weaker schools do improve and strong schools do get stronger.</li> <li>• What about MATS? MATS are another way of operating. Schools are accountable in a MAT. It is not an informal partnership. The challenge is for small schools finding a partner.</li> </ul> <p>EIPs have moved on since 2010. Local Authorities have moved away from school improvement. Shared aims and being held to account locally is a real driver. There is an expectation on governors that they should be supporting their schools in EIPs. There is funding of £400k across the county to support this.</p> <p>With EIPs, it is not about size, it is about structure. Poor performance includes special schools in shire counties and poor children in affluent areas. Children tend to perform better in cities.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Exam Results – Graham Pirt</b></p> <p>There are some good results coming out of East Sussex. In Early Years, East Sussex outperformed the Nation average with 75.8% making good development. This is well above and deserves praise. Still want more improvement so there will be the challenge to improve further. Writing is behind on speaking. There is a need to look at different areas to see why. Need to ask if assessment is always accurate by looking at assessment that fits in with the moderation process. The emphasis needs to be on achieving GLD. Teachers need to look at pupils not achieving rather than pushing other kids to succeed. There are gaps with FSM and SEN. The gap when measured against their peers has narrowed slightly. Gaps with disadvantage are still wide.</p>	

	<p>With FSM, teachers need to encourage parents to sign up, but not all will. His doesn't give a full picture. For example, traveller children are reluctant to sign up for FSM as it's is seen as information gathering. Itinerant workers are another issue on the coastal strip which has an impact.</p> <p>For KS1 phonics, 81% are at the expected level so East Sussex is in line with the national. There needs to be a greater awareness in schools on improvement training and courses in phonics and also phonics hubs.</p> <p>NB asked about how confident that KS1 and early Years results will translate into KS2. GP explained that the curriculum changed this year and the Year 6 had not had a lot of experience with it. The KS2 results were disappointing. Governors need to challenge on the process for marking and assessment. As the positive outcomes move through KS2, the outcomes should improve. The children that undertook the KS2 tests also performed less well at KS1.</p> <p>The KS2 results were disappointing. The government expected 65% and the whole country was below. Something needs looking at to find out why. 11 schools were below the floor level for progress.</p> <p>There wasn't a lot of preparation schools could do for the testes. Pupils will need to be more competent in annotation. Also need to look at question analysis across schools.</p> <p>Governors need to know what they can look for. It was felt that there wasn't enough preparation and there needs to be a focus on this being more robust. How can teachers support children to manage the tests? There is a need to look at different approaches.</p> <p>For SEN there were good results with less money.</p> <p>For spelling, this has the highest weighting and impacts on writing.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Safeguarding – Catherine Dooley</b></p> <p>Governors received an amended version of the presentation received by the Primary Heads. The presentation looked at the lessons learned from the last year. Governors are also key in their role of monitoring and delivering safeguarding.</p> <p>The presentation will look at structured activity and discussion. Governors will be able to explore the practical actions and steps governors should be taking. There will be a new online safety policy coming out which will be launched in January 2017. Safeguarding is a really high profile issue and Everyone needs to know what they should be doing.</p> <p>The 175 audit of safeguarding has identified weaknesses. Every school has to submit this yet the return rate was only 68%. Governors should be asking their headteacher if they have submitted this. Schools that do not submit can fail Ofsted on this. A reported weakness by schools is the governance of safeguarding. Another weakness is having confidence in what the Prevent agenda means.</p> <p>Governors need to report back on the 175 audit, looking at the weaknesses and challenging this. Also monitoring the implantation of the recommendations.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Governor Area Meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) County Forum Members received the Summer Term Area Meeting 2016 Summary Report.</li> <li>ii) County Forum Members were happy with the topics discussed at the Summer Area</li> </ul>	

	<p>Meetings.</p> <p>Feedback from the last round of Area Meetings: Speakers need to stick to the brief and work to a tighter specification.</p>	
9.	<p><b>Suggested items for the Spring rounds of Area Meetings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>MATS</b></li> <li>• <b>Apprenticeships</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Hot Topic question:</b> Where do you currently get your support for school improvement. Where will you get support in the future – the next year.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Any other Business</b></p> <p>None</p>	
11.	<p><b>Dates of Future Meetings</b></p> <p>The next meeting will take place on the 25<sup>th</sup> January at Sussex Coast College</p>	