

COUNTY FORUM: Autumn Term 2018

SUMMARY REPORT

Meeting: **County Forum Meeting** comprising of the County Consultative Committee and East Sussex Governors' Forum (ESGF)

Date: 3rd October 2018

Venue: Cooden Beach Hotel, Bexhill

Present: Cllr Standley (Chair), Cllr Field representing Cllr Shuttleworth, Cllr Scott, Cllr Belsey, Stuart Ford, Denise Kong, Geoff Lucas, Matthew Jones, Melanie Saunders, Sue Berry, Monica Whitehead, Jane McCarthy-Penman, Karen Marr, Emily Taylor, Clare Cornford.

Apologies: Cllr Galley, Cllr Shuttleworth, Richard Sage, Duncan Irvine, Jane Branson, Jenny Barnard-Langston.

| Item | Decisions and Outcomes | Action |
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| 1. | Minutes of previous County Forum Meeting – 2nd May 2018 The minutes were noted as a true record. | |
| 2. | Apologies for Absence Apologies were received and noted as above. | |
| 3. | Declaration of Interest 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. No interests were declared. | |
| 4. | Urgent Items No urgent items were raised | |
| 5. | Academy Update Governors received an update on the academy landscape in East Sussex. Langney Primary School joined the Swale Academy Trust and Hazel Court School joined the Southfield Academy Trust on the 1 st September 2018 | |
| 6. | Local authority governor appointments and governor vacancies. Members of the County Forum received a report detailing the nomination for appointment of Authority Governors for information. Members were made aware of the current vacancy rate in East Sussex. Councillors asked about what support is in place for new governors. KM responded that there is an induction training that all new governors are invited to attend. Induction training is not mandatory, but it is considered best practice for governors to undertake an induction course. It was felt that the missing element was the opportunity for new governors to network with more experienced governors. Cllr Scott asked for reassurance that the take up for training is as good as possible. Governors are strongly encouraged to attend training sessions. The role of the Training Link Governor is to support | |

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| | governors accessing the training they need. The clerk also has an important role in making sure governors take up training. | |
| 7. | <p>Headline analysis of educational attainment in East Sussex for the academic year 2017-18</p> <p>Members of the forum received the provisional exam results for the 2017-18 academic year. These results are provisional and are subject to change.</p> <p>In the Foundation Stage, results were above average. The gap for Free School Meals is lower and has narrowed. Phonics also shows a good story with children working at the expected level and just slightly higher than the provisional national expectation. Key Stage 1 is also above the national average and shows a slight increase for working at greater depth.</p> <p>At Key Stage 2, the results were positive. For the reading/writing/maths combined there was a 6.5% increase in percentage points compare to 2017 but is still 0.7 below the provisional national average. There were marked improvements for performance by disadvantaged children. Data for key stage 4 is still unvalidated. The data is hard to compare due to year on year changes and what is being measured.</p> <p>Cllr Scott asked about results for disadvantage and for those with Special Educational Needs (SEN). 21.8% of those with SEN met the expected standard. This is still below national but is turning around. This is challenging for schools as pupils have a wide range of need. The countywide strategy for SEN is helping schools to help their children with SEN. This is something on everyone’s radar.</p> <p>Geoff Lucas asked what numbers of children leaving college go to Russell Group universities? Melanie Saunders responded that the 10% of young people go to Russell Group Universities with the figure for disadvantaged pupils at 4%, which is lower than national.</p> <p>Cllr Belsey stated the need to understand the East Sussex data in terms of who is struggling and who is doing well and which schools need help.</p> <p>Matthew Jones stated that there is a real focus on maths. Phonics has a real impact on disadvantaged pupils. This has led to major improvement in results, but not at greater depth. Schools need to identify any pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) as this attracts the pupil premium payment that goes to the school. For a school with a significant cohort this is a lot of money. It is important to break down any barriers in claiming for free school meals so schools benefit from this funding.</p> | |
| 8. | <p>SEND Strategy 2018 – 21 and the Inclusion Mark.</p> <p>The Quality Mark for Inclusion sets the threshold for inclusion in schools. It works on the premise that it is awarded to all schools and sets out the expectation and a comprehensive baseline for inclusive practice. Schools have to keep it rather than work towards it. It links to other toolkits. It looks at research based practice and has been developed in consultation with schools to look at what would drive schools to want it and keep it. It will be launched at the ISEND Inclusion Conference in November. Schools demonstrating concerns would either trigger a dialogue or a visit.</p> <p>MJ questioned the introduction of this in terms of mitigating workload for leaders. The working group for the Inclusion Mark has undertaken lots of work around this to make it more doable. It is in line with the SEN report so there is no duplication. The SEN Audit is key in understanding SENCO workload and being mindful of asking schools to do more.</p> <p>The East Sussex SEND Strategy 2018-2021</p> <p>Ensuring that children and young people with SEND in East Sussex are supported to achieve the best possible outcomes in life remains the highest priority for all services. Partners across Education, Social Care and Health have collectively agreed strategic priorities to ensure that children and young</p> | |

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| | <p>people have a good offer of local education, are kept safe, have their health needs met and are able to transition to adulthood and independence at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>The SEND Strategy sets out these shared strategic aims. In addition to input from providers and commissioners of services for children and young people, this Strategy has been co-produced with parents and carers and incorporates the aspirations of children and young people with SEND. Joint work with the East Sussex Standards and Learning Effectiveness Service (SLES) has ensured that the strategy is reflected in school improvement priorities.</p> <p>The Four Strategic Aims are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Building Capacity for Inclusion 2. Transition- Journey of the child 3. Delivery of High Quality Provision and Services 4. Communication with Parents, Carers, Children and Young People <p>This Strategy provides both reflection on the progress to date and sets clear priorities for future improvements, explaining how services will work jointly towards achieving these.</p> <p>The Strategy: Builds on successes and learning from the previous SEND strategy (2015-18)</p> <p>Four operational focus groups led and populated by services and stakeholders will be tasked with a specific brief related to each of the Strategic Aims. Through tapping into their own services and networks, members of focus groups will consult on, and pilot proposals for, improving and developing provision and services to meet the 4 Strategic Aims. There is governor representation on each of these groups.</p> <p>The focus groups will report back findings to the ES SEND Governance and Commissioning group who are responsible for monitoring progress. This group will similarly consult with their own networks to provide strategic directives informed by feedback.</p> <p>Matthew Jones stated that the section 175 has been a rich source of information about safeguarding, and the Inclusion Mark will generate the same intelligence. Emily Taylor confirmed that parent and student voice were included in the review.</p> <p>Cllr Field asked for clarification that the transition journey of the child will include all forms of transition into and out of services and schools. This will include children to adults.</p> | |
| 9. | <p>Diminishing the Difference</p> <p>Melanie Saunders presented on Diminishing the Difference in East Sussex. Over the summer break, a survey was undertaken of school websites to look at how pupil premium is used. 76% of schools were compliant with the information that they had on their website. The survey identified 6 of the best websites that show this statutory information. This compels leadership teams to think about how they spend the money.</p> <p>The Sutton Trust produces a useful document showing the cost and effectiveness of interventions. This is to be shared with governors. The Key for School Governors has a useful article on the role of the Pupil Premium Link governor and what their role should encompass.</p> <p>A pupil premium review will look at if the money is going to the right place and having an impact. Governors need to make sure there is the evidence that the school are spending the pupil premium money correctly and that the desired outcomes are being achieved. Primary schools receive more pupil premium money (£1300) as opposed to secondary schools who receive £800 per eligible pupil.</p> | |

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| | <p>The money should be dispersed in the direction of those who need it and demonstrate how it is spent. It is intended to help children do the best they can. It is about creating opportunity for disadvantaged pupils to have access a range of different activities that may not be able to access in the same way advantaged pupils access them.</p> <p>Schools have a statutory obligation to have this information on their websites and it is the role of the governing board to ensure that this happens. Governors need to ask the right questions. Governors should ask if they are in the 24% who do not have the information on the website. Best practice should be shared as this will encourage schools to keep their websites up to date.</p> <p>Primary schools are considered to be low excluders. There is a disproportionate pattern of pupil premium students being 6 times more likely to be excluded. This can lead to a downward spiral. Discussions should be had around how pupil premium students are dealt with in terms of exclusion. This question should be asked during the headteacher report.</p> <p>The primary panel for exclusions has been successful in discussing children in the locality. It has been rolled out in Eastbourne and is having a big impact with schools. Statemented children are much more likely to be excluded. With an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) there will be lots of provision in place to manage their needs There is an embargo on exclusions for children with EHCPs.</p> | |
| 10. | <p>Local Area Forums</p> <p>Members of the forum received the attendance figure for the summer round of local area forums. It was noted that the attendance at Lewes was low and this would be raised with the attendees at the Lewes Forum.</p> <p>It was agreed to circulate the educational attainment information to all governors. It was agreed that the SEND Strategy, including the Inclusion Mark and Diminishing the Difference would be on the agenda at the next round of local area forums in November.</p> | |
| 11. | <p>Any other Business</p> <p>From the ESGF meeting, members of the ESGF asked what is being done to secure more funding in schools. Cllr Standley responded that East Sussex County Council is lobbying hard to get more money into schools. Costs for schools are going up yet income is not. It is important to keep challenging the figures.</p> <p>Nationally headteachers are lobbying Downing Street and explaining what the real life situation is. There is a lot of attention on the issue and the message may be getting across. Schools are getting less and less. It is really important to talk to and listen to those at grass roots level and to make civil servants understand the ramification of their recommendations.</p> | |
| 12. | <p>Dates of Future Meetings</p> <p>24th January at St Mary's House, Eastbourne.</p> | |