

**NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**22 JULY 2015**

**STATEMENT OF SCHOOLS AND EARLY YEARS PORTFOLIO HOLDER**

**COUNTY COUNCILLOR ARTHUR BARKER**

**Medium Term Financial Strategy & 2020 North Yorkshire**

The Children and Young People's Service has continued to meet its savings targets. The scale of budget cuts required – and achieved to date, whilst maintaining service levels, has been a significant challenge. The objective has been to protect front-line services as much as possible, thus enabling a restructured Directorate to operate effectively across its universal, preventative, targeted and acute service responsibilities, in line with legislation.

2015-16 sees the implementation of some major transformation programmes, including the review of Preventative Services and a new way of delivering school improvement.

This information appears in the Statements to Council for both Executive Members for the Children and Young People's Service as this reflects our joint responsibility for all relevant resources.

**School Improvement**

As mentioned in my statement to May's Council, work is continuing to implement the recommendations of the Commission for School Improvement which focuses on a move to greater sector-led improvement with Headteachers and collaboratives playing a more significant role in school improvement. The implementation of the Education Partnership and the Improvement Partnerships are now taking place. The first meeting of the Education Partnership took place in May and the first meetings of the Improvement Partnerships are all planned.

The Chairs of the Early Years, Primary and Secondary Improvement Partnerships are now in place. Jane Pepper (Headteacher, Childhaven Nursery School, Wendy Ripley (HMI and Director of Pen Green Teaching School Alliance) and Rob Pritchard (Headteacher, St John Fisher Catholic High School), will take up their respective roles with immediate effect. We are currently recruiting for the Chair of the Special Schools Improvement Partnership. There is one Primary Improvement Partnership, rather than the original five, with an independent Chair. This builds on the current networks, skills, capacity and strengths of the six Teaching School Alliances. This has released additional funding that will be used for school improvement initiatives.

The Executive considered the proposals for the School Improvement Service restructure in March and approval to implement the new structure was given. The restructure is now almost completed and the new team will be in place for 1 September as planned.

Whilst significant progress continues to be made, the Authority has recently opened itself up to a regional peer challenge process of our school improvement arrangements which saw a team of external senior officers from other Yorkshire and Humber local authorities interview 120 people (staff, governors and Headteachers) and analyse data over the course of three days. Feedback was positive with strong endorsement of our direction of travel whilst there were also some useful areas identified for further development.

## **OfSTED Outcomes**

Ofsted data, as at start of July 2015, showed that North Yorkshire has improved to 83% which means that the authority is now in line with national for the proportion of all schools good or outstanding.

Between January and June 2015, 16 primary schools improved from “requires improvement” to “good”, with the result that 84% of primary schools in both North Yorkshire and England are currently good or outstanding. This is an improvement of 4% in North Yorkshire since January 2015, more rapid than the national improvement of 2% during the same period.

73% of secondary schools in North Yorkshire are currently good or outstanding. This compares with national averages for the percentage of schools being good or outstanding of 74%. Since January 2015 the proportion of secondary schools good or outstanding in North Yorkshire has improved by 2%, in line with the national improvement.

At the start of July 2015, the proportion of pupils attending good or outstanding schools in North Yorkshire is in line with national at 81%. The proportion of pupils who attend good or better primary schools is 83% in North Yorkshire, 1% below the national of 84%. The proportion of pupils who attend good or better secondary schools is 79% in North Yorkshire, 2% above the national of 77%.

There are three primary schools in an Ofsted category – Richmond CE, Farnley and Skipton St Stephen's. Effective progress continues at St. Stephen's RC who will convert to sponsored academy status on 01/08/15. Richmond CE have had their first monitoring inspection from HMI. We are working with both Richmond CE and Farnley CE schools to accelerate progress. However, at the last HMI visit to Farnley on 3 July the school was judged not to be making effective progress towards the removal of special measures although HMI commented that the LA have provided high level and high quality support.

Two secondary schools have been inspected during the Summer Term – Sherburn and George Pindar - the judgement on those schools remained as 'requires improvement.' There are currently two secondary schools in special measures - Graham School and Filey School. HMI continue to be pleased with the progress that Graham School is making towards the removal of special measures, and the school should be re-inspected in the Autumn Term. Filey School will convert to academy status in September, under the sponsorship of the Ebor Academy Trust in York.

## **School Funding**

There are no major changes since my last statement to Council, In terms of individual school budgets, following lobbying by this and other Councils, North Yorkshire was allocated additional funding of £9.8m. All of this has been passed directly to schools and equates to an increase of 3.1% per pupil. We are expecting the DfE to publish expectations around school funding for 2016-17 later this summer and that this will include proposals regarding the future funding of High Needs and Early Years, including the costs of increasing the early entitlement. We will continue to lobby for the best deal for all schools in the county.

## **School Organisation**

I have two updates on matters raised in my last statement to Council.

Following discussions with the local authority and the Diocese of West Yorkshire and the Dales, the governors of Farnley CE School are consulting on closure, with effect from the end of December 2015. There are currently 10 children on roll and the school has been rated as “inadequate” by Ofsted.

On 3 June the ground was officially “cut” for the new primary school being built at Staynor Hall, Selby. The school will be open in September 2016 and will be run by Ebor Academy Trust.

### **Forest Moor School (formerly Foremost School)**

I am pleased to report that, following a successful Headteacher appointment process, a new substantive Headteacher has been appointed to the school. Although Mr Marc Peart will take up the role of Headteacher formally with effect from 1 September 2015, he will be in school for the remainder of the Summer Term to work with pupils and staff to prepare for the new term in September, building on the improvements that the school has made this year. Mr Peart is moving to Forest Moor School having successfully led improvements in a similar school in Lancashire.

An Ofsted inspection of the school has recently been held although the outcome is not yet published. At its last monitoring visit the school were reported to be making reasonable progress towards the removal of special measures.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks formally to Simon Ashby from the LA’s School Improvement Service who has provided leadership as Headteacher to the school on a secondment basis since September 2014.

### **School Debating Competition**

Monday 8 June saw the final of the North Yorkshire Primary Schools Debating Competition. Prime Minister’s Questions was nothing compared to the spirited debate that took place amongst children from the eight primary schools across the County who were winners of the area heats. The debating competition, which was started three years ago by the then county council chairman, Cllr Cliff Trotter, has grown year on year and 48 schools were involved in the competition this year.

This year’s finalists were Hutton Rudby Community Primary School, Richmond Methodist Primary School, Burton Leonard Primary School, Staveley Community Primary School, Kirkbymoorside Community Primary School, Ingleton Community Primary School, Northstead Primary School, Scarborough and Tadcaster Riverside Community Primary School. The topic of debate was “Are children healthier and happier now than their parents were at the same age?” and the overall winner by just one point was Ingleton Primary School. I am sure Members would like to join me in congratulating the young people involved.

**County Councillor Arthur Barker**  
**Executive Member for Schools and Early Years**