

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

9 NOVEMBER 2016

STATEMENT OF SCHOOLS AND EARLY YEARS PORTFOLIO HOLDER

COUNTY COUNCILLOR ARTHUR BARKER

National education policy developments

There have been very recent developments around the national education policy proposals previously signalled in the White Paper "Educational Excellence Everywhere". I will update Members verbally at Council on this matter.

Since my last statement Government have also published a subsequent Green Paper "Schools that work for everyone" and you will no doubt have seen coverage of the proposals regarding grammar schools. North Yorkshire Education Partnership will be debating the green paper at its meeting on 16 November and a formal response to the consultation will be made thereafter.

The proposed timeline for the consultation on the findings of the national review, led by Alan Wood, into the powers and levers required by local authorities in order to enable them to carry out their statutory duties, is now likely to be early Spring 2017.

North Yorkshire continues to support schools in any discussions that are likely to result in positive and productive partnership working which generate still further improvement.

School and early years funding

We continue to await important decisions from the DfE about school funding for April 2017. In July the Secretary of State announced that although the government remained "firmly committed to introducing fairer funding for schools, high needs and early years", and that the stage one consultation had "been met with an overwhelmingly positive response from headteachers, teachers, governors and parents", the intention to introduce most of the changes to the main school budget block from April 2017, as proposed earlier this year, was now being dropped. Schools have therefore been promised the same level of funding for 2017-18 as in this current year. However there remains the possibility that the proposed restrictions on local decision-making regarding non-delegated budgets would begin to take effect from next April. This could potentially have a significant impact on the Council's budget.

A further complication to the Council's budget has been added with a consultation which has progressed for potentially 2017-18 implementation on Early Years funding. The proposals, if implemented, will also have a detrimental effect on the many early years and childcare providers in the county as they suggest a reduction in funding for North Yorkshire and the redistribution of that money to other parts of the country. We have expressed our strong reservations to government and have written to all local MPs urging them to support the providers in North Yorkshire and setting put our arguments why the proposed formula and timescale are wrong. The consultation suggested implementation of the reduced funding from April 2017 with only a one-year transition.

Pupil Performance Outcomes 2016

North Yorkshire is once again one of the top local education authorities nationally for school achievement at A-level and GCSE. In secondary schools, end of key stage 4 (end of Year 11) attainment again placed us in the top 25% of Local Authorities with the proportion of students attaining A*- C in both English and Mathematics improving by over 2% to 67% (4% above the

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national average of 63%). Two new headline measures have been introduced in 2016, both of which include GCSE scores from across the curriculum including English and Mathematics. North Yorkshire's Attainment 8 score is 51.6, in comparison with national of 49.9.

In primary schools, both attainment and progress were slightly below national averages at the end of key stage 1 and 2, although achievement at the end of Early Years Foundation Stage was above average. At both key stage 1 (end of Year 2) and key stage 2 (end of Year 6), 2016 was the first year of rigorous new tests and teacher assessment frameworks which were designed to measure achievement within the new National Curriculum. In North Yorkshire 51% of Year 6 children attained the new standard in all of reading, writing and mathematics, in comparison with 52% in state schools nationally and 70% of five year olds reached a good level of development in comparison with 69% nationally.

Raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils continues to be a key priority for North Yorkshire schools with some strong signs of improvement this year resulting from targeted work in key areas. The Early Years Closing the Gap Strategy has led to improved outcomes for disadvantaged children at the crucial early stages of their education. Primary and secondary schools are working closely with the LA in the Achievement Unlocked programme to raise expectations and improve outcomes for young people eligible for the Pupil Premium. Even at the early stages, outcomes for disadvantaged pupils have improved measurably in participating secondary schools and many primaries.

School Ofsted inspection outcomes

Ofsted outcomes are once again all above national, and improvements in the year to October 2016 have been more rapid than the national average. 91% of North Yorkshire primary schools (90% national) and 85% of secondary schools (79% national) were good or outstanding with 92% of primary age pupils attending a school which is good or outstanding (2% above the national average) and 88% of secondary age pupils attending a school which is good or outstanding (6% above the national average).

Following the conversion of Hawes CP School to a sponsored academy, there are now two primary schools which hold an inadequate judgement - Moorside Infants and Richmond CE Primary Schools – and one secondary school – Easingwold School – which has recently gone into special measures. The LA is working closely with the Regional Schools Commissioner, the schools themselves and potential academy sponsors .

Opportunity Area status for Scarborough District

The Secretary of State's recent announcement that Scarborough District is one of six "Opportunity Areas" across England which together will receive £60m over the next three years to help local children and young people get the best start in life is to be very much welcomed. We are encouraged to see recognition of the dual importance to educational success of what takes place "within" but also "beyond" the school gates.

This initiative will build on our own innovative scheme, known as the "Scarborough Pledge" where we are working with schools, businesses, cultural partners and the district council to roll out a range of ground-breaking schemes to improve educational attainment, increase cultural, training and work opportunities and generally broaden horizons for young people along the coastal area. A County Council recruitment drive to attract top quality teachers to the resort is already bearing fruit. The County Council committed £750,000 over three years towards Scarborough Pledge and the additional government investment will enable us to build and extend this important work to improve life chances for the area's young people.

Officers will be working with Department for Education officials over coming weeks to develop an implementation plan. The enhanced programme will run from April 2017-2020.

School Organisation

Fellow Members will be pleased to know that the new primary school in Selby opened as planned in September for nursery, reception and pupils in years 1-4. It is called The Staynor Hall Community Primary Academy and is being run by the Ebor Academy Trust. By September 2018 it will be open to all year groups.

Following consultation by governors of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Bishop Thornton, the Executive decided on 16 August, to close the school with effect from 31 August 2016 and the school is now closed.

The governing body of Horton-in-Ribblesdale CE VA Primary School has decided to consult on the closure of the school at Easter 2017 due to very low pupil numbers. There are currently 15 pupils on roll. Consultation closed on 4 November and governors will decide whether to publish statutory proposals for closure. If they proceed the County Council's Executive will take a final decision on the proposal in January 2017.

On 18 October the Executive Member for Schools agreed to initiate a consultation on a proposal to close Drax Community Primary School due to very low pupil numbers with effect from 31 August 2017. There are currently nine pupils on roll. The consultation will run until 12 December with a decision to be taken by the Executive on whether to publish statutory notices on 10 January 2017. If agreed this would lead to a final decision being taken by the Executive on 28 March 2017.

We continue to support schools to look where possible to working with others and ensuring that any decisions made by governing bodies or the local authority are made in the interests of high quality and sustainable education for children.

Area based review of post-16 education.

The national Area Based Review process has now begin in North Yorkshire. The area covered by the review includes the LEP area (York, North Yorkshire and East Riding) and Hull from the Humber LEP. There is also some involvement from Leeds City Region. The first meeting has taken place with the next due on 3 November.

The review focuses on finding ways to ensure post-16 colleges are financially viable, sustainable, resilient and efficient with an offer that provides the right balance of high quality education and training provision to meet the needs of local learners and employers. This includes greater specialisation and higher level technical skills supporting economic development. The key issues for North Yorkshire were identified as accessibility linked to rurality, enhancing performance on the coast, continuing to address participation and NEET levels, addressing local skills needs, and increasing both high level apprenticeships and entry level qualifications. The whole Area Review process is expected to be completed by the end of March 2017.

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Executive Member for Schools and Early Years