

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

15 FEBRUARY 2017

STATEMENT OF SCHOOLS AND EARLY YEARS PORTFOLIO HOLDER

COUNTY COUNCILLOR ARTHUR BARKER

National education policy developments

Government published the Green Paper “Schools that work for everyone” in September and consultation on the proposals regarding grammar schools closed in December. It has been suggested by the Education Policy Institute that North Yorkshire was one of six areas that nationally that might benefit from increased selection. The North Yorkshire Education Partnership (Schools Forum) debated the green paper at its meeting on 16 November 2016 and a formal response to the consultation has been made. Our response welcomed the development of Opportunity Areas as a route to enhancing social mobility rather than a focus on increasing selective provision. The government’s response to the consultation is now awaited along with details of any subsequent changes to legislation.

A 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 likely to take place this Spring. Details of the timetable are still awaited.

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

Since the last Council meeting we have had information from the DfE regarding the future funding for schools, high needs and early years. The Government’s response to our comments about the early years proposals show that the Department has listened at least in part to our concerns. The new arrangements will effectively mean a stand-still position in overall funding terms (rather than the previously proposed significant reduction) although there is an impact on funding rates at individual provider rate. We are doing our best, including using one-off funding, to ease the transition to the new system which will come into effect later this year.

On school and high needs funding, the DfE released the long-awaited stage two consultation on a National Funding Formula in December 2016. Again, I am pleased to note that the government has listened to our concerns and, for example, has decided not to proceed with its proposal to end our ability to help schools who experience changes in pupil mobility throughout the year.

The consultation notes that when new arrangements take effect from April 2018, there will be a net gain to schools in North Yorkshire of £7m – on top of the £9.8m we received in 2015. Whilst this is welcome, we have concerns about how this money will be distributed at an individual school level. A National Funding Formula means that decisions around this will be taken at a national level and will mean that 10% of local primary schools will lose out, as will 55% of secondary schools. In particular we do not agree with the reduction in sparsity funding and the allocation of the same lump sum amount to both primary and secondary schools.

The deadline for replying to the Stage 2 consultation is 22 March and we will again set out where we think further refinements can be made, after discussions with school representatives in the county.

School budgets for 2017-18 are currently being finalised and this will mean an increase to school delegated budgets of around £4m, partially a result of higher pupil numbers, but also additional delegation to schools as a result of changes in regulations.

Implementation of the Early Years 30 hour offer

North Yorkshire County Council is one of four new councils which have been invited to deliver the Government's flagship 30 hours childcare offer early, before the programme rolls out nationally in September 2017. Along with Dorset, Leicestershire and Tower Hamlets, we will join the eight original "Early Implementer" Councils who launched the offer last September, building on their work so far in testing delivery benefits and challenges.

Each Council will work with nurseries, pre-schools and childminders in their area to begin offering the 30 hours of free childcare places per week to all eligible three and four-year-olds from April, doubling the existing 15 hours entitlement currently available for parents. The four additional councils to join the programme will have the opportunity to test specific elements of childcare delivery, such as rural geography or levels of deprivation. Each will work closely with the existing Early Implementer councils (Hertfordshire, Newham, Northumberland, Portsmouth, Staffordshire, Swindon, Wigan and York) who will be able to offer advice throughout the launch period and early delivery phase.

School Organisation

The governing body of Horton-in-Ribblesdale CE VA Primary School, having consulted on the closure of the school at Easter 2017 due to very low pupil numbers, decided not to take forward statutory proposals for closure. The Executive at its meeting on 6 December decided to proceed to publication. The representation period closed on 2 February with a final decision on the proposal to be taken by the Executive on 21 February 2017. There are currently 12 statutory aged pupils on roll.

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

The governing body of the Mount Grace Federation which included Osmotherley Primary School, Swainby and Potto VA CE Primary School and Ingleby Arncliffe VA CE Primary School decided in November to dissolve their federation and seek views on the amalgamation of the two Church of England schools. The governors' consultation on the amalgamation proposal was initiated on 10 January and runs to 20 February 2017. It proposes the technical closure of Swainby and Potto VA CE School and the expansion of the catchment area of Ingleby Arncliffe school. They will take a decision on whether to proceed with the publication of statutory closure proposals in March with a final decision to be taken by the Executive in May for implementation in September 2017. There are 26 pupils in total across the two schools.

An expression of interest has been lodged by the LA with the Department for Education to establish a Free Special School in the Selby area. We await the outcome of the Department's consideration of the application hopefully by April 2017. Children requiring special school provision in Selby are currently needing to travel some distances to access provision.

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.

School Ofsted inspection outcomes

The percentage of pupils attending good or outstanding schools remains above national average: 92% of primary age pupils (1% above the national average) and 87% of secondary age pupils (5% above the national average). The proportion of secondary schools which are good or outstanding is 85% (6% above national average), with 28% outstanding (6% above national). 91% of primary schools are good or outstanding, which is in line with national (91% national).

There are currently two primary schools which hold an inadequate judgement - Moorside Infants and Richmond CE Primary School. One secondary school holds an inadequate judgment – Easingwold School. The LA is working closely with the Regional Schools Commissioner, the schools themselves and potential academy sponsors.

GCSE and A level performance tables published January 2017

North Yorkshire is 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 attainment placed North Yorkshire in the top 20% of Local Authorities for the proportion of students attaining A* - C in both English and Mathematics improving by over 2% to 67.5% (4% above the national average of 63%). North Yorkshire outcomes for attainment of the academic suite of GCSEs known as the EBacc were also 4 per cent above the national average, with 29 per cent of students attaining A* - C in a combined suite of English, mathematics, sciences, language and humanities. The proportion of pupils who attained good GCSEs in the separate academic subject areas of mathematics, science and languages was more than 5 per cent above the national average.

North Yorkshire is above the national average for both progress and attainment, using the new key stage 4 accountability measures which demonstrate the achievement of all pupils across a broad curriculum, with double weighting for English and mathematics. North Yorkshire's 2016 new Attainment 8 score is 51.8, in comparison with 50.1 nationally. North Yorkshire's Progress 8 score is +0.04, above the national average of -0.03.

A new set of accountability measures has been introduced for Post-16 results. Using the new points system, A level results placed North Yorkshire in the top 20% of Local Authorities for average A level point score of 35.16, which converts to grade B-, above national of C+. North Yorkshire is in the top 10% of Local Authorities for Applied General qualifications, with an average outcome of Distinction+.

Destinations are now a key accountability measure. 91% of North Yorkshire's sixth form leavers going on to positive and sustained education or employment destinations, 3% above national average of 88%. 24% of North Yorkshire students progress into one of the top third of UK Higher Education Institutions, 7% above the national average.

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