

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

13 NOVEMBER 2019

STATEMENT OF EDUCATION & SKILLS PORTFOLIO HOLDER

School funding

Following the announcement in the Chancellor's Budget statement, the indicative 2020-21 Schools Block funding for North Yorkshire provides a £17.4m increase (5.19%) compared to the 2019-20 funding level. Additional funding for schools is very much welcome although the local authority continues to have concerns over small, rural schools at both primary and secondary level, and the impact of changes in the mobility factor for service schools.

A consultation is underway with North Yorkshire maintained mainstream schools and mainstream academies around implementing the funding for 2020-21 which will include a mandatory minimum per pupil level of funding: £3,750 per pupil for each primary school, and £5,000 for each secondary school. The consultation period has been determined to fit within DfE-imposed timescales.

For 2020-21, the DfE are allowing LAs to seek a transfer of Schools Block funding to the High Needs Block – any proposal exceeding 0.5% requires the approval of the Secretary of State. The views of Schools Forum and all local schools and academies will be sought prior to this request. In North Yorkshire, the decision whether to seek a transfer will be balanced against the announcement that an additional £5.4m (11.1% increase) of High Needs Funding will be allocated to the LA. This additional funding allocation, although welcome, is insufficient in the context of a 68% increase in demand over the past five years. In the absence of further funding, DfE proposals to tighten the ringfence on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) will mean that the LA will need to explore options that will present to challenges across the sector in North Yorkshire.

Strategic Plan for SEND Education Provision 0-25

Work continues to progress to implement the Strategic Plan. This includes:

- Introduction of the Ladder of Intervention to support schools in meeting the needs of children and young people with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- Development of the new model of targeted mainstream provision with an increased number of schools expressing an interest and the development of a service level agreement and enhanced support offer for those schools hosting provision
- Proposals around PRS/AP changes have been approved and the LA has agreed the place commission from September 2020.
- The completion of a public consultation on proposals for educating children and young people with medical needs
- Pilot of the Pivotal approach for restorative practice in schools in six secondary schools and one primary school.
- Capital work completed at The Dales School, The Forest Schools and Brooklands Community Special School.
- The assessment of applications from groups wishing to open and operate the proposed free school in the Selby area, and work with the DfE on the proposed school.

The review of the first year of the plan is underway.

School organisation

The Governing Body proposal to relocate Bishop Thornton CE School to the former Burnt Yates School site was approved by the Executive Member on 25 June 2019. The school relocated on 1 September 2019 and is now known as Admiral Long CE Primary School.

Statutory notices for the lowering of age range at Burton Salmon Community Primary have been published with the matter scheduled for determination on 17 December 2019.

Significant capital projects are either underway or recently completed at a number of North Yorkshire schools and delivered from the School's Capital Programme and the Basic Need Programme. Examples are:

- King James's School, Knaresborough – new 6th form centre including demolition of existing provision.
- Barlby Bridge Community Primary School - additional accommodation
- Cliffe CE VC Primary School - additional accommodation
- Fairburn Community Primary School – additional accommodation
- Nawton Primary School – additional accommodation

There have been one secondary and eight primary academy conversions in Quarter 2. There are currently a further seven schools that have either been issued with an Academy Order, or an Academy Order is pending, and that are in the pipeline to convert during 2019 or 2020. Beyond the expected conversions (forced and voluntary) the pipeline appears to be slowing. It is a reasonable assumption, based on current knowledge, that there will be fewer conversions during 2020.

School Exclusions

I am pleased to report that the number of permanent exclusions fell by almost 20% during the 2018/19 academic year. 87 children were permanently excluded from schools in North Yorkshire during the 2018/19 compared to 106 in 2017/18, a decrease of 18% and a return to a more expected level of permanent exclusion. By the end of September of the 2019/20 academic year there had been 3 permanent exclusions in North Yorkshire schools, equal to the same period in 2018/19. The most common reason for a permanent exclusion in North Yorkshire schools in 2018/19 was 'persistent disruptive behaviour', 28.7% of all reasons recorded, continuing the trend that has emerged over the past few years.

Fixed term exclusions (ie an exclusion from school for a fixed period of time, typically five days) are also reducing. There were a total of 5,970 fixed-term exclusions in the 2018/19 academic year compared to 6,112 in the 2017/18 academic year, a 2.3% reduction. A total of 2,028 children were fixed-term excluded at least once in the 2018/19 academic year a slight reduction of 2.5% on 2017/18 (n=2,081). As we have seen with permanent exclusions, the most common reason for a fixed-term exclusion in North Yorkshire schools continues to be 'persistent disruptive behaviour', accounting for 48.6% of all reasons recorded in 2018/19.

As mentioned above, we are working with schools to roll out the Pivotal approach for restorative practice in schools to help reduce exclusion rates further. This is currently being piloted in six secondary schools and one primary school.

School Ofsted inspections – overall performance

As at 1 October 2019 the percentage of North Yorkshire schools judged Good or Outstanding now stands at 76% at secondary level with 79% of pupils in good or outstanding schools, in line with, or better than, national performance. At primary level 84% of schools are judged Good or Outstanding with 83% of pupils in Good or Outstanding schools: both comparators are slightly below national levels.

Cllr Patrick Mulligan
Executive Member for Education and Skills