

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

19 July 2023

STATEMENT OF COUNCILLOR WILKINSON EDUCATION, LEARNING AND SKILLS PORTFOLIO HOLDER

School Improvement

During this academic year (since September 2022 to the end of May 2023), there have been in excess of 120 Ofsted inspections of both LA maintained schools and academies.

The latest Ofsted monthly management report (May 2023) shows that the proportion of North Yorkshire schools and academies judged good or outstanding is 83%. This has increased by 1% compared to the May 2022 figure. The rate of increase is in-line with the national rate of improvement for the same period.

This year the local authority has seen a number of its schools improve from Requires Improvement judgements to Good. Of notable success is Ripley Endowed CE School improved from Inadequate to Good at its recent graded (section 5) inspection. After a long period of underperformance, the school has benefitted from the support of the council's education teams, the appointment of an Interim Executive Board and a local community that have been responsive to the changes.

A group of schools and academies within the DfE Priority Education Investment Area (former Scarborough District) have been invited to participate in a DfE funded programme of school improvement support. The selected schools share several contextual challenges. Participating schools and academies are currently working at the planning stage on priorities specific to their context. The programme will move to the implementation stage in the autumn.

Music service

The Music Service will be bidding for the next round of funding from Arts Council England, to deliver the new National Plan for Music Education. This will be a joint bid with York as the regional boundaries have been re-drawn.

The new fund holders will be announced in April 2024, at which point the new Music Hub will come into effect.

Our Music Centres are starting to offer a range of new opportunities for children and families. Harrogate Music Centre will be opening an Early Years music group on a Saturday morning, and we are starting a new guitar ensemble in Selby. We are also working with a professional trumpet player from the University of Hull to develop brass playing in the Selby area. We very much hope that this will lead to the re-launch of Selby Music Centre Brass Band.

Adult learning and skills

The Adult Learning and Skills Service have drawn up and are implementing an action plan in response to the February 2023 Ofsted inspection. These actions address the areas for improvement and seek to demonstrate the impact of the council's strategy.

On behalf of the council, the service has published a draft accountability statement in response to the Local Skills Improvement Plan, this details how the service will seek to cement its position as the gateway to upskilling and re-skilling of adults in priority sectors and to target adults who would most benefit from training but are not currently engaging. The service is part of a collaboration to effectively utilise the funding from the Learning and Skills Improvement Fund which commenced in June 2023.

Outdoor Learning Service

The Outdoor Learning Service successfully completed its first full financial year since re-opening.

Since reorganisation in September, the service has worked together with the Communications Team and Property Services, collaborating to make most efficient use of resources and opportunities. A new website is due for imminent launch in order to promote our unique real outdoor adventure opportunities to children and young people across the county and beyond.

The new Head of Outdoor Learning started in post at the beginning of July, and two new roles, Level 3 Apprentice Outdoor Education Tutors are also taking up post this summer, one each at Beverley Park and East Barnby.

Work is continuing to finalise the business case for future investment and service development to be presented to the Executive for a decision in November.

School Organisation

Skelton Newby Hall Primary School – On 30 May 2023 the Executive determined that the School should close at the end of the current academic year.

Whitby Secondary Schools – On 20 June 2023 the Executive approved the amalgamation of Caedmon College Whitby and Eskdale School for implementation in September 2024.

Wavell Infant and Junior Schools – the Council are currently consulting on a proposal to amalgamate the two Wavell schools in Catterick to create a single 3-11 primary school. The consultation closes on 21 July and the Executive are scheduled to consider the consultation feedback on 22 August 2023. The change, if approved, would be implemented in April 2024. [Proposal to amalgamate Wavell infant and junior schools in Catterick | North Yorkshire Council](#)

Proposal to establish a new special school provision in Harrogate - the Council are currently consulting on a proposal to establish a special school for autistic children at the site of the former Woodfield Community Primary School in Harrogate. The consultation closes on 24 July and the Executive are scheduled to consider the consultation feedback on 22 August 2023. [Proposal to establish a new special school provision for autistic children | North Yorkshire Council](#)

New schools

Northallerton new primary school – the construction of the new primary school to serve the North Northallerton development area commenced on 19 June 2023. The school is scheduled to open in September 2024.

Selby Special Free School -The Department for Education (DfE) are currently in the process of agreeing draft plans with a recently appointed lead construction contractor. Once this is in place, public consultation on the draft plans will be held with the intention to do so by autumn 2023, following which a planning application will be submitted. Timescales for

delivery will be dependent on the planning process but the DfE are aiming to open the school in the academic year of 2025/26. Officers within the council continue to provide all of the support requested to assist the DfE in delivering the school

Northallerton new special school - In March 2023 the Council were informed by the Department for Education (DfE) that its bid to create a new special school on the former Northallerton School site on Grammar School Lane had been successful. The project is to be delivered by the DfE and is in its very early stages, as such it is too soon to speculate on a target opening date for the school.

Medium Term Financial Strategy – July 2023

Demand increases in the number of children and young people assessed as requiring an Education, Health and Care Plan have been well documented in the council's finance and performance reporting. The financial pressure in North Yorkshire reflects a national funding issue and the Directorate are engaging with the Department for Education in Tranche 3 of the 'Developing Better Value in SEND' programme. The aim of the programme is, through diagnostic and case review work, to identify and implement sustainable changes that improve support and outcomes for children and young people with SEND, as well as to improve the financial stability of High Needs Block budgets.

Work is also progressing to mitigate demand pressures in high-cost external residential placements.

Although this information appears in my Statement to Council it should be noted that both Executive Members for the Children and Young People's Service have joint responsibility for all relevant resources.

We continue to work with schools that are facing financial difficulty through support, challenge and where necessary, intervention. We recognise the particular challenges of small, rural secondary schools and we will continue to represent schools in advocating for a fair financial settlement. As the Department for Education continues to move towards a direct national funding formula for all schools, we will continue to engage with national consultations and the North Yorkshire Schools Forum on schools, high needs and early years funding.

The Spring Budget 2023 announced additional funding to increase the hourly funding rates for early years providers to deliver the existing early years entitlements for disadvantaged 2-year olds and 3- to 4-year olds from September 2023. We anticipate that the Department for Education will provide further details on the Early Years Supplementary Grant (EYSG) in summer 2023

COUNCILLOR ANNABEL WILKINSON