

WALSALL EDUCATION BOARD

Tuesday 23 November 2004 at 4.30 pm

at Rosedale CE (C) Infant School, Stroud Avenue, Willenhall

Present

Sir G. Hampton (Independent Chairman)
Councillor H. Withnall
Mr. M. Quinn
Mr. A. Butterworth
Mr. M. Lee
Mr. D. Jones
Mr. D. Drewe
Ms. H. Lomas
Mr. J. R. Williams
Mr. C. Ball
Dr. J. Mathias

In attendance:

Mr. D. McNulty – Executive Director, WMBC
Mrs E. Simpson – Managing Director, Education Walsall
Mr. T. Stanier – Education Walsall

Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Ms. J. Antill and Ms. J. Cosgrove.

The Chairman welcomed members to Rosedale CE (C) Infant School and the Head Teacher, Ms. J. Hosking gave a brief presentation to members and stated that the school had 180 pupils, it was a two form entry infant school for pupils aged between 4 and 7 years. There was no nursery at the school. The school maintained close links with Lane Head Nursery and Short Heath Junior Schools. Rosedale is a Church controlled school with a worship centre that was used by both the Church and the school. The school was successful and had gained various school achievement awards. It was the first school to achieve the active mark gold for PE which was awarded by Sports England; the school has IIP status, Healthy School status, Childrens Charter and the school has just submitted applications for Arts Mark.

She informed the Board that 100% of 7 year old children in the school had achieved level 2 in reading and maths and just 1 pupil did not achieve level 2 in

writing. The school was active in raising money for charity, it had a dedicated staff and a large number of after school clubs.

The school encouraged community use through the Church and a number of traditions were maintained.

The Board thanked the Head Teacher for her presentation.

Notes of meeting held 5 October 2004

The notes of the meeting held on 5 October 2004, were submitted:-

(see annexed)

With regard to e mentoring, Ms. Simpson stated that SERCO had suggested that it would fund piloting an e mentoring programme in Walsall and Bradford, it was anticipated that St. Thomas More would be part of the pilot scheme and it would link in with the Education Business Partnership.

The Board **AGREED** the notes of the meeting held on 5 October 2004, subject to the inclusion of Mr. D. McNulty on the list of those in attendance.

LEA Ofsted inspection

Ms. Simpson thanked colleagues for their support during the Ofsted inspection and advised that Ofsted was impressed by the unity focus, and purpose across every level within the LEA and every part of the partnership across Walsall and the improvements achieved. The first draft of the report had been received and had appeared to be very positive. Ms. Simpson went through the report and drew out the recognition of partnership working, performance management, improvements corporately and the role of Walsall Education Board as an effective group and its performance in monitoring strategy as well as the successful partnership between Education Walsall and the Council. Ofsted had also recognised improvements within schools.

Mr. McNulty referred to the issues identified by Ofsted and how these linked in with the Boards objectives.

The Chairman confirmed that the contribution by members of the Board was very important as well as that staff, pupils and residents of the Borough. It was hoped that improvements in education would make a difference to learners in the Borough. The Chairman thanked members of the Board for their involvement in the Ofsted inspection.

Notes of Sub-Group meeting held on 1 November 2004

The notes of the Sub-Group held on 1 November 2004, were submitted:-

(see annexed)

Mr. Drewe referred to the need to establish a sub-group consisting of a broader cross section of board members in order that research could be commissioned. The group would look at progress/attainment and the annual plan and that Steve Munby be invited to attend.

Mr. McNulty informed the Board that Steve Munby was Executive Director of Blackburn and subsequently moved to Knowsley LEA and he had supported the LEA on the Ofsted self assessment.

The Chairman referred to the five year plan for childrens services and the implications for the Board would need to be pursued with the DfES, this was a nationwide issue.

The notes of the Sub-Group meeting held on 1 November 2004, be received.

Review of WEB objectives

The report of the Managing Director, Education Walsall was submitted:-

(see annexed)

It was **AGREED** that a task focused group be established to assess progress against WEBs objectives. The process would take 2/3 meetings at the most and the group should consist of 4/5 members.

Members were requested to inform the Chairman should they wish to volunteer.

Annual plan process - away day

The Chairman requested the Board to consider attending an away day to discuss the annual plan process. Members were reminded of the importance of as many stakeholders as possible attending the away day.

It was **AGREED** that an Away Day be arranged to discuss the annual plan process.

Key issues identified within the Ofsted inspection of schools

The report of the Managing Director, Education Walsall was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Members attention was drawn to an amendment to the chart headed "How Ofsted Judged our Primary and Nursery Schools Last Year". The last line of the chart relating to "inclusion" should read 7 in the good column and not 6 as printed.

Mr. Stainer drew the Board's attention to the analysis of scores attained at key stage 2 as compared with the attainment of the same pupils at key stage 3 this would show areas where improvement was necessary.

A number of schools in the borough had introduced strategies to improve attendance but the impact of this had not yet been realised.

The quality of teaching was found to be good or very good and the impact of the twin track approach on the inclusion strategy had been found to be very good.

Three schools were found to have no key issues and this had been identified as a major achievement. Very few special schools had been inspected but again there had been a positive picture. No secondary schools were inspected last year but five would be inspected before the February half term.

Mr. Quinn advised that Education Walsall also worked with the arch diocesan Governor support in head teacher appointments.

Mr. McNulty indicated that the dark line should be drawn between "good" and "satisfactory" in order that the gap can be made up in achievements and would show attainment and outcomes for children. He asked if a pattern was emerging between attendance, standards and inclusion. Mr. Stainer advised that there was a link but more information was required on monitoring.

The Chairman referred to Walsall's improvement rate compared with other Black Country authorities but even with that level of improvement the Authority would not reach national norms for some time and felt that comparatives over a specific time period should be included.

Mr. Lee confirmed that, despite the small number of staff in the Governor Support Unit, the improvement in service had been tremendous, any future available resources should be given to the unit. The Council should consider increasing the Parent Governor representation on Scrutiny. Ms. Simpson confirmed that this matter had gone out to ballot with the suggestion that the representation be increased to five.

With regard to attendance levels, the Board was informed that targets for attendance would be set on a banding system and it was felt that the two school improvement progress and attainment booklets could be discussed at the away day.

The Board **NOTED** the report.

Suggested dates for future meetings

The report of the Head of Democratic Services was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Mr. McNulty advised the Board that he would not be available on the 25 January 2005.

The Board **AGREED** the timetable for meetings of the Group as set out below and members are requested to attend at 4.00 pm in order to commence the meeting at 4.30 pm:-

Spring term 2005:	Tuesday 25 January 2005 Tuesday 8 March 2005
Summer term 2005:	Tuesday 3 May 2005 Tuesday 12 July 2005
Autumn term 2005:	Tuesday 4 October 2005 Tuesday 22 November 2005

The Board **AGREED** that, in the event of any additional meetings proving necessary, in consultation with the Chairman, or in his absence the Vice-Chairman, be authorised to make the necessary arrangements.

Any other business

The Chairman referred to the re-focusing of compulsory education and the impact that Walsall College could have on that.

Mr. Ball informed the Board that he had been in post at the College for 10 months and was interested in learning and raising aspiration in Walsall. He had a unique opportunity to make a significant difference in education which involved looking at the wider context rather than 14-19, but how the link is developed with under 14's.

Mr. Ball said that he would be looking at ways in which the college could work with partners to develop new opportunities and the curriculum on offer at the college would be measured against the skills required within the community. The

new Director for 14-19 years education at the college has been given a clear strategic steer to work closely with schools to develop capacity and skills.

In terms of educational operations, Mr. Ball indicated that a clear statement was necessary to enable collaborative to take place work with a range of partners in order to develop educational aspirations and show how education and the development of skills could lead to a transformation in individuals lives in terms of their contribution to the economy.

Discussions had been taking place with two blue chip international companies and opportunities were being explored that would enable local people to access leading edge technology and gain the necessary skills to enable them to access job opportunities, aid the economy, and improve their life styles.

It was hoped that the college could help schools increase their capacity by close collaboration.

The college was now a national centre of excellence for sign making and it was hoped that with new technology and machinery it could become an international centre of excellence. The college was showcasing facilities and was developing and delivering training, Walsall had the opportunity to develop skills required now and in the future.

The Board **NOTED** the report and a further report would be submitted to the next meeting.

Termination of meeting

The meeting terminated at 6.15 pm.

Chairman:.....

Date:.....