

**Schools Forum**

**Tuesday 16 January 2018**

**Walsall Strategic Partnership Education & Inclusion Board – A Sector Led Improvement Model & Approach**

**1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1** The Board to work collaboratively with the LA and be the accountable body for raising standards in Walsall across the education and inclusion sectors through a focus on the shared strategic priorities.

**2 Recommendations**

- 2.1** Move from ECB (Education Challenge Board) to Walsall Strategic Partnership Education & Inclusion Board (WSPEIB) - a sector led improvement model and approach

**3 Background**

- 3.1** The way in which education in England is provided and controlled is undergoing a major change. As a result, the relationship Walsall Council has with its schools and educational settings, and the relationships they have with each other, is changing. Several factors affect these new relationships:

- the ambition across Walsall that every child goes to a 'good' or 'outstanding' school;
- the growing numbers of autonomous schools including academies and a free studio school alongside a growing number of sponsors and trusts to engage with ;
- an expectation that all schools will be responsible for their own improvement and will support others schools to improve;
- new funding settlements and rules, which mean a greater proportion of funding will be delegated to individual schools;
- a new inspection framework that has raised the bar for schools, as well as new floor targets for primary schools;
- new expectations in terms of the primary and secondary curriculum.

- 3.2** This has meant that the role of the LA is changing but it:

- continues to hold a range of statutory responsibilities essential for the effective operation of the education system such as ensuring a sufficient supply of school places and supporting vulnerable children, as well as continuing to be the maintaining authority for community schools;
- is best placed to bring clusters of schools together to take decisions which serve the collective needs of a whole community of children and young people, rather than just those children and young people who attend a particular school;
- is able to bring an in-depth and evidence-based perspective on the needs of local communities, based on knowledge of how communities use wider council services, demographic and population data and economic trends;

- provides an essential link for schools into social care, youth justice, health, family well-being, lifelong learning, economic regeneration and employment services.
- will become a commissioning body offering traded services and in turn supporting schools to be effective commissioners in turn.

## **4 Current Position**

### **4.1 At present we have:**

- Strong, experienced and well established networks of staff, training and school to school support within our Geographical Clusters as well as networks of schools set up and led by Head teachers.
- Regular meetings with our 5 Teaching schools regarding: training, delegation of SLEs/NLEs, individual bespoke school support and SSIF (Strategic School Improvement Fund) involvement across the Black Country.
- School Improvement Team working across all schools, particularly those of concern and brokering appropriate support for schools as well as delivering on all statutory duties.
- Seconded Head teachers working as School Improvement Partners for the LA, one day per week but also providing school to school support
- LA services offering a robust and appropriate support programme to all our vulnerable groups of young people
- LA services offering a robust and appropriate support programme to all schools

### **4.2 The original **Walsall Education Challenge Board** was set up with the overall purpose: to govern Walsall's School Improvement Strategy.**

**Membership** of the panel included an Independent Chair, the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, Executive Director: Children's Services, Assistant Director - Access and Achievement, Head of Service along with Head teachers and governor representatives across all phases.

The board met five times per academic year with a **Remit** to:

- Through its actions and communications the Walsall Education Challenge Board will monitor progress in and provide challenge for Walsall's Strategy for supporting School Improvement and its associated improvement plan

### **This was achieved by:**

- Providing constructive challenge to those responsible both for delivering improved outcomes in schools and those providing support to schools' improvement.
- Monitoring the raising of standards at all key stages across all schools and academies

- Monitoring the proportion of schools judged good and better as well as those requiring improvement
- Evaluating the impact of improved leadership and management
- Evaluating the impact of the Council's School Improvement function
- Monitoring and evaluating the progress of the post Ofsted actions to ensure they are contributing to the strategic aims of the overall school improvement strategy

**Additionally, the Board also sort to:**

- Examine the progress being made in enabling schools to play a full role as the key universal service in the wider partnership for children
- Review the quality and impact of services available to support and challenge schools and other settings
- Evaluate the impact of sector led improvement and research in practice on school improvement.

**Role of the Independent Chair:**

- To keep the Board focused on the key objectives of the Walsall School Improvement Strategy and its associated operational plans
- To regularly review the progress of the strategy to support school improvement in terms of outcomes
- To ensure that the Board's findings are regularly reported to the Children and Young People's Partnership
- To represent the board to all stakeholders as appropriate.

**The Education Challenge Board Reported to the Children and Young People's Partnership Board**

**Links were also established with:**

Headteacher Associations, Walsall Governor Association, JNCC and Children and the Young People Scrutiny Panel, Regional Schools Commissioner, Academy Sponsor

The ECB has successfully increased Walsall's position in terms of a higher percentage of Good or Better schools (85.5% with NA 89.3%) and improved outcomes for our young people but there is still a journey to be taken from Early Years to post sixteen; as outcomes are still not good enough to give our young people the best possible life chances. We now need a board set up with a wider range of experienced professionals with certain skills and expertise to be aware, accountable and take on a shared responsibility for Walsall schools.

**4.3 Protocols**

- Regular attendance
- Professional trust and commitment

- Agree to avoid fragmentation and maximise benefits of our existing partnerships
- Build upon existing expertise and good practice
- Collaborative working
- Clarity of purpose
- Confidentiality
- Provision of a supportive environment for effective implementation
- Commitment to the shared vision and working across disciplines
- Papers to be distributed one week in advance of the meeting to allow members sufficient time to read key documentation and papers

**4.4 MEMBERSHIP: Chair to be voted in for 1 year term of office**

- Portfolio Holder for Education
- Executive Director of Children's Services
- Assistant Director: Access and Achievement
- Head of Service
- Chair Walsall Primary, Nursery & Special Schools Headteachers (PNS)
- Chair Walsall Association of Secondary Headteachers (WASH)
- Chair Special Schools
- Chair on behalf of Federations in Walsall
- Chair Primary teaching schools
- Chair of Secondary teaching schools
- Academy chain sponsor
- Cluster Chair
- National Leader of Governance (NLG)
- National Leader of Education (NLE)
- Walsall Children's Social Care/Early Help
- Further Education (FE) ( Walsall College/Walsall Adult Community College)
- Higher Education (HE) (Birmingham City University/Wolverhampton University)
- Access team member
- Virtual School
- SENDI
- Education Business Partnership (EPB)

Invited Guests

Chief Executive,  
Regional Schools Commissioner,  
Regional Teaching Schools Director  
Trade Union Representatives  
Other relevant Professionals

**4.5 Meeting Schedule**

Board to meet half termly and venue to be agreed. Proposed dates are:

- Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2018: 2-4pm
- Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2018: 2-4pm
- Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2018: 2-4pm
- Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2018: 2-4pm

#### **4.6 Minutes**

These will be distributed to all members of the Board and to School Forum members. They will also be published on the LINK termly.

#### **4.7 Priorities to be Addressed:**

- All schools Good or Better
- Improved outcomes for children
- Reduced exclusions
- Address the needs of vulnerable groups
- Provide Children with the best start in life so they can fulfil their potential and make positive contributions to their communities

#### **4.8 To address these **Priorities**, we will work in partnership and focus upon:**

- Inclusion
- Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF)/Sub Regional Improvement Board (SRIB) addressing West Midlands regional priorities
- Vulnerable groups of pupils
- School to School Support (S2S)
- Schools of concern
- Fair Access Panel (FAP)
- Children Missing Education (CME)
- Alternative Provision (AP)
- Admissions
- Virtual School
- Access team
- Walsall Inclusion Partnership (WIP)
- Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)
- Solutions Panel
- School Expansions
- Behaviour and Exclusions
- SENDI Youth Justice
- Social Care/ Early Help
- Employability

#### **4.9 Ways of Working**

Based upon the priorities above, the Board will decide and determine the allocation of funding to the identified needs. They (sub committees) will strategically monitor, evaluate and review the effectiveness and impact of the work undertaken by each group or panel. This will be assessed against pupil participation rates, outcomes and inclusion measures. There will be an expectation for a learning continuum to be implemented across the borough.

**5 Financial Implications**

- 5.1** To be agreed by Schools Forum. A request is made for £250K (2018/19) and £250K (2019/20) to undertake work on priorities identified above. At each meeting an update will be given.

**6 Legal Implications**

- 6.1** No issues directly arising from this report.

**7 School Improvement**

**7.1 Benefits of Approach**

- All children in Walsall to attend a good or better school
- Improved pupil outcomes
- Reduced exclusions
- Board members to take decisions which serve the collective needs of the communities of children and young people in Walsall
- Build upon the existing expertise and good practice from our Clusters of schools
- Provide streamlined **WRAP AROUND SERVICES** for the child and family
- Partnership work to strengthen and sustain the approach adopted to ensure that children in Walsall get the best possible life chances
- Bespoke packages of support for schools of concern
- Raising aspirations of our young people
- Ensure young people have appropriate skills and access to jobs so economic benefits are felt across communities

**8 Members Eligible To Vote**

- 8.1** All elected members with voting rights are eligible to vote on this matter.

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January 2018