

WALSALL EDUCATION BOARD

Tuesday 8 February 2005 at 4.00 pm

Bloxwich CE JMI School, High Street, Bloxwich, Walsall, WS3 3LP

Present

Sir G. Hampton
Councillor Mrs E E Pitt
Councillor H. Withnall
Mr. A. Butterworth
Mr. D. J. Jones
Mr. S. Flynn
Ms. Lomas
Mr. C. Ball
Dr. J. Mathias
Ms. Cosgrove

In attendance

Mr. T. German – Education Walsall
Ms. H. Denton – Education Walsall

Apologies

Apologies for non-attendance were submitted on behalf of Mr. J. R. Williams, Mr. M. Quinn, Mr. D. McNulty and Ms. J. Antill.

Presentation from the Head Teacher

The Chairman welcomed members to Bloxwich CE JMI School and the Head Teacher, Mr. Blunt gave a brief presentation.

Mr. Blunt explained that the school had improved significantly since the introduction of Education Walsall in 2002. Formally known as the National, the new school was established in 1862, it aimed to provide Christian values within an inclusive 20th century environment. To achieve a village church school ethos the “three C’s”, care, communication and community spirit had been adopted as an effective strategy. Re-awarded the Investors In People award, the school was keen to develop and maintain strong partnerships to achieve its vision.

In conclusion, Mr, Blunt acknowledged the shortcomings and expressed that these had been turned into opportunities detailing various initiatives that had been emplaced within the school.

The Board thanked the Head Teacher for his presentation.

Notes of meeting held on 23 November 2004

The notes of the meeting held on 23 November 2004, were submitted:-

(see annexed)

With regard to 'e' mentoring, it was stated that a meeting had taken place and that outcomes had been positive.

Discussion was held regarding venues for future meetings, it was suggested that the three Head Teacher representatives together with David McNulty identify venues through various forums and feed the information to the Chair.

The Board AGREED:-

- (i) That the notes of the meeting held on 23 November 2004, be agreed as a correct record;
- (ii) That venues for future meetings be established.

Notes of Sub-Group meeting held on 31 January 2005

The notes of the Sub-Group were submitted:-

(see annexed)

The notes of the Sub-Group meeting held on 31 January 2005, were AGREED

Regeneration in Walsall

The Board received an update on Regeneration in Walsall:-

(see annexed)

It was reported that the provision of a purpose built Business and Learning Campus comprising a state of the art college and a co-located business campus would provide a range of business, education and training facilities. Attracting over £100 million investment from both private and public sector the project would deliver strong links with the existing town centre.

The new sports facilities had been completed and it was envisaged that the student village would be completed by summer 2005. The School of Education rebuild was “out to tender” and work was being undertaken as to the detailed planning. The University of Wolverhampton, Walsall Campus is also being redeveloped. A group was meeting in March 2005, which would include Tony Stainer and Diana Woods to progress this further.

The Chair acknowledged the nomination of Tony Stainer and Diana Woods to the group and urged any volunteers to attend as engaging partners was important. It was requested that plans of the new school of education be brought to a future meeting. Discussion followed on the need to engage focus groups and forums.

Chris Ball reported that it was critical from a college perspective to develop more formalised links with Wolverhampton University.

Regarding the development of specialist schools and the college, it was reported that a new post was being established to look specifically on developing links with partners.

The Chair suggested that regeneration in Walsall be included on all future agendas for update purposes.

Chris was thanked for his report and requested to keep the Board aware of developments.

The Board AGREED that Regeneration in Walsall be included as a standing item on future agendas.

Sub-Group on progress and attainment

This item was deferred to be considered at the next meeting of the Board.

Performance 2004

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

(see annexed)

The report contained indicators that demonstrated performance during 2004, and made reference in particular to:-

- The Ofsted report;
- The Audit Commission of Head Teachers;
- Best Value Performance Targets

Particular emphasis was given to the Audit Commission survey of Head Teachers, it was reported that a response rate of 82% had been achieved, among the highest across England.

Under achievement of boys was discussed and it was suggested that contact be made with other Education Authorities whose trends were showing improvements.

The Board NOTED that contents of the report and welcomed the positive news and expressed the need to continue to improve and set rigorous targets.

Approaches to community cohesion

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

(see annexed)

The Board considered an update report on progress made regarding supporting community cohesion. Forming one of the Boards objectives for 2004, there was a need to fit into Council Structures and have strategies in place.

Attention was given to the draft Equality and Diversity Strategy and the intention to promote the right of equal opportunity and freedom of information through roles as:-

- Individuals;
- Service provider to Walsall schools and education settings on behalf of Walsall Council;
- Employer;
- Community partner and leader.

Initiatives such as providing Islamic lessons and the provision of prayer facilities in schools were highlighted.

The Board noted the content of the report.

Representation on Walsall Education Board

The Chairman sought clarity as to who was responsible for finding suitable nominations for the vacancies on the Board. Following discussion it was agreed that the Chair would undertake to identify nominees to fill the headteacher vacancy.

WEB – Strategic planning

It was suggested that an away day be established to review various documents including the draft Equality and Diversity Strategy.

The Board AGREED:-

- (i) That Mrs Ensor identify possible dates around Easter;
- (ii) That the date once established be 'e' mailed to all and that commitment to attend be given.

Date of next meeting

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on 8 March 2005.

Any other business

It was reported that agenda items for the next meeting would include:-

- (i) Children's Centres and Extended Schools;
- (ii) SEN special service provision.

Termination of meeting

The meeting terminated at 5.55 pm

Chairman:.....

Date:.....