

Schools Forum

Wednesday 17 October 2018

EAL Bid

**1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To update School Forum members about the submission of an EAL (English as an additional Language) bid
- 1.2 The 'Controlling Migration Fund' bid asks Councils to submit applications for funding to mitigate against the impact on the host community and enhancing integration.

**2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 Schools Forum to note to date the submission of the bid by 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018.

**3 Background**

- 3.1 Walsall has been chosen as an Integrated Communities area due to its proactive approach of working strategically on policy issues relating to community cohesion, integration and migration. Walsall has a proven track record of innovation and a bank of cultural expertise which it can readily draw upon in order to 'tackle the root causes of poor integration and create a stronger, more united Britain' by boosting English language skills, increasing opportunities for women and promoting British values in education. (Gov.co.uk 14/03/18)

Walsall's population will grow to 300,000 by 2030, an increase of 8%, including a net increase of 500 people p.a. through international migration. The school age population (aged 5-16) is projected to increase to 48,000 (+11%) by 2030. Migrant communities also have a higher birth rate due to their age profile and some cultural preferences. British-born children of families where English is not the main language also have a need for additional English Language support. Given the migration trends into Walsall the need to support EAL (English as an additional language) students is an increasing and long-term phenomenon. Additionally, our figures are likely to be an underestimate as it is difficult to establish an accurate number of migrants living in the borough due to the transient nature of the groups and in some cases reluctance to engage with authorities, often born out of negative experiences in their home countries. There are significant needs for EAL support due to the sustained and significant number of arrivals into Walsall. The impact on Walsall schools is substantial, with some schools comprising 95% EAL (English as a second or additional language) students including over a third of who are in the early acquisition stage.

## **Agenda Item 10**

The nature of migrants moving into the borough is also changing, increasing the number of individuals with lower levels of English Language competency and more complex needs; migrants from the EU are now characterised by a higher proportion of Roma families who tend to be less well formally educated, although they are often reluctant to declare their ethnicity due to their community's long history of persecution. Additionally migration is increasing from non-EU countries including adults and school-aged children who have experienced disruption in their education due to political upheaval including asylum seekers.

As the number of migrants is increasing and as the complexity of their needs increase, a 'one size fits all' model of school-based integration is not appropriate hence our will to initiate and evaluate two comparative models of holistic support that include SEND (Special Educational Needs Identified) as central to the package of support and desire to meet the needs of all students within a framework that offers best value for money.

In October 2017 Discussions took place at WASH about St Thomas More Secondary Catholic School developing a provision for TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) and being able to offer places to a number of migrant children who could not speak English across the borough. This was welcomed as schools had expressed concern through this forum and the FAP (Fair Access Protocol) about not being able to meet the needs of children who could not access the curriculum due to being at an early English acquisition stage. At the same time, Caldmore Primary Academy also offered to share their expertise in working effectively with these children being newly arrived to the country to our primary schools.

The Local Authority commissioned an ex-Head teacher from Walsall in April 2018, to write the bid and expand on this existing work and involve community groups and activities for adults as well as school-aged children. During the summer term the local authority worked with a number of partners to develop a project that would benefit the whole borough. The Local Authority were delighted to gain wide-scale support from WASH, University of Birmingham, four key schools and other school partners by July 2018.

The authority has made the decision to explore two comparative models of TEFL provision; one based on an alternative provision or hub model and the other to be fully integrated. The University of Birmingham will analyse the relative merits of both models and the findings will inform future strategy and planning.

Two schools (one primary and one secondary) will implement the hubs and two more schools (one primary and one secondary) will implement the integrated model. All four schools will access additional staffing, resources and traded services to support EAL students and to ensure that SEND matters are addressed effectively and central to all four school provisions.

Additionally the project aims to offer CPD and specialist support for TEFL and provide an understanding of vulnerable communities including Roma to all schools in the borough. There is also an intention to develop a forum and research links to share best practice.

St Thomas More Catholic School along with other borough schools has appointed and developed EU graduate migrants who needed EAL support prior to joining the school workforce. EU migrants express frustration that they are often able to get TA jobs but not progress into teaching as easily. Barr Beacon Secondary Teaching School has agreed to support a training programme for suitable candidates, who will be offered TEFL if required as English fluency will be a prerequisite for course entry. Given the current staff shortages experienced in the borough and nationally, priority will be given to candidates with degrees in shortage subjects. The need is to train staff specifically to teach in the borough and there may need to be the implementation of a minimum timescale agreed for them to work here in return for their training.

We are seeking to host 'one stop shops' in some schools to support family TEFL, school admissions, access to services including housing and health and to receive sessions which will help further their understanding of British society for the benefit of all.

We will also offer pastoral sessions for community groups and support for schools linking to help combat negative attitudes towards different communities and hate crimes.

#### **4 Current Position**

**4.1** The bid is in draft form. Partners are being consulted including the funding agency for comments which will be acted upon to ensure every chance of success.

#### **4.2 Next Steps:**

The bid will be submitted by 1<sup>st</sup> October 2018

#### **5 Financial Implications**

**5.1** If successful the bid will bring a million pounds of funding into Walsall. The funded period ends on 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2020.

#### **6 Legal Implications**

**6.1** Partners involved in the bid will have to conform to reporting standards and share data with the University of Birmingham adhering to GDPR regulations.

#### **7 School Improvement**

Ensuring that migrants are properly funded will remove barriers to their learning and interruptions to the rest of the class. There is an increasing body of evidence to show that once language barriers are removed, EAL students progress rapidly and have a motivational impact on the rest of the class.

Author: Connie Beirne – Head of Service Educational Standards and Improvement

September 2018