

5 January 2021

Update: Inclusion Strategy

Ward(s): ALL

Portfolios: Councillor Chris Towe – Education and Skills

1. Aim

To update the Committee on the Walsall Right 4 Children Inclusion Strategy 2020-2025.

2. Recommendations

That the Committee considers the contents of this report and adopts and endorses the Inclusion Strategy 2020-2025.

3. Report detail – know

- 3.1 The Inclusion Strategy is in line with the Walsall Right 4 Children vision of the broad view of the role of schools in their immediate community, in Walsall as a whole and beyond and with the aim to meet the needs of the whole child. It outlines the core priorities and aims to ensure a step change in improved outcomes for all children and young people. The strategy also aligns with the Council's Corporate Plan 2018-2021, which states 'Children have the best possible start and are safe from harm, happy, healthy and learning well.'
- 3.2 Our strategic priorities are based on an assumption that, given the right environment, culture, approach and circumstances all our children and young people can thrive, flourish and achieve great outcomes.
- 3.3 The Walsall Right for Children Inclusion Strategy aims to set out the respective roles and responsibilities of all concerned with educational outcomes including the Local Authority. The Local Authority is a **champion** - of educational transformation with a strong moral purpose and democratic mandate to ensure good outcomes and a shared vision for our children, families and communities. It is also a **convener** – bringing leaders together, connecting to best practice within and beyond the system and facilitating the best partnerships - and a **commissioner** – bringing the strategic picture, sharing intelligence and data and enabling and commissioning support, challenge and development.
- 3.4 Walsall Right for Children's vision for inclusion is one where potential is unlocked for all learners whatever their abilities and needs. In schools and settings where an inclusive and an open restorative culture helps gain the necessary skills and confidence to be inspired and be aspirational. Systemic improvement across Walsall is required to achieve this, and the strategy articulates a vision for

reforming practice built on four key pillars and identified in the education review conducted by Edward Timpson.

- 3.5 The strategy details the approach from policy into practice in order to deliver quality first teaching and what we will require and challenge our school leaders to promote in terms of good behaviour, positive relationships, resilience, emotional well-being and engagement in learning to ensure that successful outcomes for all Walsall children and young people are the norm. As research over time has found that the consistent features of school that effectively promoted positive behaviour.
- 3.6 Central to our Inclusion Strategy is the strong belief that schools are, for the most part, self-improving. We recognise of the value and importance of system leadership in promoting inclusion and school improvement. Teaching School Alliances and hubs along with other strong schools with capacity, are taking an increasing role in developing system leaders and sharing good practice. These schools embrace the concept of school-to-school support and take responsibility beyond their own organisations.
- 3.7 We believe that as a Local Authority we need to work with our schools and partners to develop a multi-tiered structure that will work within our local context ensuring that the local improvement system provides high-quality support and is credible with school leaders. This will mean that we will need to have a robust commissioning process that operates through these partnerships and can work through the complexities of multiple providers in a mixed economy.
- 3.8 The Inclusion Strategy needs to be read in conjunction with our SEND Strategy and our Accessibility Strategy.

4. Decide

The Committee to adopt and endorse the Walsall Right 4 Children Inclusion Strategy.

5. Respond

Any recommendations made by the Committee will be assessed against the Inclusion Strategy and our SEND and Accessibility Strategies.

6. Review

The impact of the Inclusion Strategy on the inclusive practices of schools and setting via the Schools Causing Concern protocol.

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