

Minutes

EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE



HILLINGDON
LONDON

20 March 2013

Meeting held at Committee Room 5 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW

Committee Members Present:
Councillors Catherine Dann (Chairman)
David Benson
Lindsay Bliss
Jazz Dhillon
John Hensley
Susan O'Brien
John Riley

Other voting Representative
Tony Little – Roman Catholic Diocesan

Witnesses Present:
Liz Horrigan, Head Teacher of Harlington Community School and Chair of the Managed Moves and Inclusion Panel
Martin Rainsford, Head Teacher of The Douay Martyrs School and Chair of the In-Year Fair Access Panel

LBH Officers Present:
Linda Sanders (Corporate Director of Social Care and Health), Julien Kramer (Interim Chief Education Officer), Merlin Joseph (Deputy Director Children and Families), Pauline Nixon (Senior Manager for Access and Inclusion), Steven Maiden (Democratic Services Officer).

59.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE <i>(Agenda Item 1)</i> Apologies were received from Councillor Judith Cooper.	Action by
60.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING. <i>(Agenda Item 2)</i> Councillor David Benson declared a general non-pecuniary interest as he was a Governor of Uxbridge High School and lectured at further and higher education colleges. He remained in the room during the meeting and took part in the discussions. Councillor Lindsay Bliss declared a general non-pecuniary interest as she was a Governor of Brookside Primary School. She remained in the room during the meeting and took part in the discussions. Councillor John Riley declared a general non-pecuniary interest as he was a Governor of Field End Infant School. He remained in the room during the meeting and took part in the discussions.	Action by

	<p>Councillor Catherine Dann declared a general non-pecuniary interest as she was a Governor of Newham Junior School and Bishop Ramsay C of E School. She remained in the room during the meeting and took part in the discussions.</p> <p>Councillor Susan O'Brien declared a general non-pecuniary interest as she was a Governor at Sacred Heart Roman Catholic School and was working at Ruislip High School. She remained in the room during the meeting and took part in the discussions.</p> <p>Tony Little declared a general non-pecuniary interest as he was a Governor at Pinkwell Primary School and Hartlington Community School. He remained in the room during the meeting and took part in the discussions.</p>	
61.	<p>TO CONFIRM THAT ALL ITEMS MARKED PART 1 WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND ALL PART 2 ITEMS WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE <i>(Agenda Item 3)</i></p> <p>It was noted that all items would be considered in Part 1.</p>	Action by
62.	<p>MATTERS THAT HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED IN ADVANCE OR URGENT <i>(Agenda Item 4)</i></p> <p>There were no matters notified in advance or urgent.</p>	Action by
63.	<p>TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING DATED 20 FEBRUARY 2013 <i>(Agenda Item 5)</i></p> <p>The minutes of 20 February 2013 were agreed as a correct record.</p>	Action by
64.	<p>SECOND WITNESS SESSION - ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR VULNERABLE CHILDREN <i>(Agenda Item 6)</i></p> <p>Witnesses</p> <p>To assist the Committee with the review Mr Martin Rainsford, Head Teacher of The Douay Martyrs School and Chair of the In-Year Fair Access Panel and Ms Liz Horrigan, Head Teacher of Harlington Community School and Chair of the Managed Moves and Inclusion Panel were present to provide Members with information.</p> <p>A summary of the evidence provided by the witnesses is set out below.</p> <p>Fair Access and Managed Moves Panels</p> <p>The In-Year Fair Access Panel and the Managed Moves and Inclusion Panel met jointly every 3 weeks with the purposes of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensuring that challenging pupils and those without a school place were allocated a place within the appropriate timeframe of 20 school days. ▪ Allocating school places to pupils who had been excluded, those who had compassionate reasons for moving schools and 	Action by

- those who had decided to undertake a managed move.
- Ensuring that schools with vacancies were not overburdened with challenging pupils.

The witnesses noted that the Hillingdon Tuition Centre was a high-quality resource which was used, in part, to educate pupils with challenging behaviour. Certain pupils were placed at the Tuition Centre on a longer term basis because their behaviour was so problematic that a place in a Secondary School was unlikely to be successful. Other pupils were at the Tuition Centre on a shorter term basis pending assessment of their additional needs. Some students referred to the Managed Move and Inclusion Panel were not placed because incomplete paper work had not been submitted or there was a suspicion that children had been removed from a school by parents seeking to get past waiting lists. Pupils with no known behaviour issues were not placed at the Tuition Centre, but educated in the interim at Brookfields.

It was also noted that the Panels did not place Year 11 pupils seeking a place as it was too difficult to find an appropriate educational fit for these students given differing school curricula. This was also true for Year 10 pupils who also often struggled to integrate into a new school but the Panels did seek to place this group in-year. It was also noted that the panels gave top priority to cases where looked-after children were involved.

Both witnesses highlighted that these Panels were successful because they had buy-in from both the Primary and Secondary schools in the Borough. This was partly due to the fact that three Head Teachers sat on each of the Panels and also had a rolling Head Teacher position. Other strengths of the Panels were noted to be that they were seen to come to good, fair and compassionate decisions and that they had a workable turnaround period of 3 weeks.

It was noted that all school were necessarily part of the In-Year Fair Access process and the placement of previously permanently excluded pupils but that, as the Managed Moves and Inclusion process was not mandatory, only 16 of Hillingdon's 18 Secondary Schools took part.

The Bulge and Off Rolling

Witnesses noted that the bulge in student numbers was already being experienced by schools in the Borough and that the issue did not seem to be diminishing. This could lead to schools beginning to get to maximum capacity in the near future. This was proving to be problematic for many children involved as growing class sizes and increased levels of mobility could be a disturbing factor to pupils' education.

Increasingly the issue of mobility was seen to be a barrier to schools making improvements in pupil attainment because, where they used to be in a single school of 5 years, many pupils were now staying for as little as 12 months before moving on. Members requested that officers provide a briefing on Primary School Mobility in the Borough.

Julien Kramer
/ Dan
Kennedy

Due to this bulge, both witnesses highlighted that the education provision provided at the Brookfield Adult Learning Centre or a similar, interim provision would certainly need to be in place in the short term and suggested that a similar provision might need to be implemented in the longer term.

With regards to the illegal off rolling of children from schools that had been discussed at the previous meeting, the witnesses suggested that this was not a major problem in the Borough. They both suggested that, where off rolling was taking place, schools should be named and shamed as this was an illegal activity for a school to undertake.

It was noted that Local Authority officers monitored the position closely and provided direct challenge where appropriate.

Discussion

A Member asked whether it would be possible for the disciplinary history of pupils to be shared as another school place was being sought. A further question was asked about whether the growth of Academy Schools and their differing curricula would make it increasingly difficult to find appropriate places for students in year.

Witnesses clarified that it would not be possible to share pupils' disciplinary history as protocols stipulated that only certain information could be requested. It was also noted that the support that the Council offered to the panels in finding alternative school places was invaluable and that the processes in place were workable even in the changing educational environment.

A Member asked why 2 Secondary Schools in the Borough were not taking part in the Managed Moves and Inclusion Panel.

Officers noted that this information was not known but noted that it could be investigated and an update provided to Members outside of the meeting.

A Member asked what arrangements the Council currently had in place to accommodate the specific needs of children of armed services personnel.

Members were informed that officers had met with Head Teachers to discuss the education provided to children with parents in the armed forces. Further work was currently being undertaken on this area by officers.

A Member asked how pervasive the problem of bullying was as a cause for children needing to move schools.

Witnesses noted that bullying was a cause for children moving schools although it was not one of the main causes. It was also noted that issues of bullying were now sometimes difficult to solve by the moving of schools due to the impact of social media.

Pauline Nixon
/ Steven
Maiden

In response to a Member's question, Witnesses advised that, once a pupil had passed through one of the panels, they were satisfied that they had been treated fairly. However, their experiences prior to coming to the panel were a different matter as they could have had bad experiences at their previous schools. It was noted that officers in the Council's Admissions Team would be best placed to comment on which schools were inclusive and which were not.

A Member asked whether it would be useful for parents to have assistance from the Council to guide them through the admissions process.

Officers noted that such support had been provided in the past but had ceased. It was also noted that providing such support in the current economic climate would be difficult.

A Member asked whether the flow of information had changed due to the changing relationship between local authorities and Academies.

Mr Rainsford noted that he was unable to speak for other Academy Head Teachers but his Academy elected to provide the Local Authority with the same information as it always had. However, he emphasised that there had been clear and significant Government change in this area and that Academies were not obliged to report to the Council as they had in the past.

Following the departure of the witnesses, further discussion took place around the education provided at Brookfield in which Members noted that:

- The education provision was not a full curricular offer due to the wide variety of ages and student needs.
- The provision was certainly needed in the short term and could need to be expanded in the future.
- The current site was not appropriate to offer a long-term solution to the growing need for such an interim education provision. The large number of adults at the site did not provide an appropriate space for children to be educated. It was suggested that the Borough's youth centres could be used as alternative spaces.
- The growing numbers of pupils at Brookfield were not due to behavioural problems but were due to schools not being co-operative in providing alternative places and the need to support and socialise pupils into the English education system.

Based on the evidence provided by all witnesses and discussions, Members suggested the following areas as those around which recommendations should be based:

- The investigation of the viability of using alternative spaces to provide the interim education currently taking place at Brookfield Adult Learning Centre. In particular, to investigate whether the Borough's Youth Centres would be more appropriate spaces for this provision.
- Undertaking research on how the Council could best support

	<p>and guide parents through the schools admissions process. The possibility of introducing Parent Champions as a means to meet this need should be investigated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To refresh the Council's website with information on the schools admissions process. ▪ To review the arrangements for permanently excluded and referred pupils at the Hillingdon Tuition Centre. An update on the discussions that had taken place on this issue would be provided by Members outside of the meeting. <p>The Committee requested that Officers formally thanked the witnesses for their contribution to this review.</p>	<p>Pauline Nixon / Steven Maiden</p> <p>Julien Kramer</p>
65.	<p>UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PAST REVIEWS OF THE COMMITTEE (Agenda Item 7)</p> <p>Resolved: That the Committee noted the progress provided in the report.</p>	Action by
66.	<p>FORWARD PLAN 2010/2011 (Agenda Item 8)</p> <p>Resolved: That the Committee noted the Forward Plan and decided not to comment.</p>	Action by
67.	<p>WORK PROGRAMME 2010/2011 (Agenda Item 9)</p> <p>The Committee asked that an update on Special Educational Needs to include information on funding, the Green Paper and the Task Group be provided at a future meeting and that this be reflected in the Work Programme.</p> <p>Resolved: That the Committee confirmed the dates of the meetings.</p>	<p>Action by</p> <p>Steven Maiden</p>
	<p>The meeting, which commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 9.15 pm.</p>	

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Steven Maiden on 01895 250472. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.