

Minutes

Petition Hearing - Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services
Wednesday, 21 November 2018
Meeting held at Committee Room 4 - Civic Centre, High Street, Uxbridge



	<p>Members Present: Councillors David Simmonds CBE (Chairman)</p> <p>Officers Present: Dan Kennedy, Director - Housing, Environment, Education, Performance, Health & Wellbeing; Iris Cerny, School Improvement Link; Liz Penny, Democratic Services Officer</p>
1.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>
2.	<p>TO CONFIRM THAT THE BUSINESS OF THE MEETING WILL TAKE PLACE IN PUBLIC</p> <p>It was confirmed that the business of the meeting would take place in public.</p>
3.	<p>TO CONSIDER THE REPORT OF THE OFFICERS ON THE FOLLOWING PETITIONS RECEIVED: PETITION IN RELATION TO MINET JUNIOR SCHOOL</p> <p>The petition organiser thanked the Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services and officers for offering petitioners the opportunity to voice their concerns and be heard. The petitioner organiser outlined parents' concerns regarding Minet Junior School as detailed in the petition submitted to the Council.</p> <p>Concerns and points raised included:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• When the petition was submitted in July 2018, there was no Head Teacher in place. At the time, there was no stable senior management team and a number of teachers left the school - it was reported that 8 teachers had left the school on the same day;• There had been a large number of supply teachers in the school which was an area of concern; particularly for Year 5 and Year 6 children since they were at a crucial point in their education;• It was felt that communication with parents had been lacking which was frustrating;• Petitioners stated that bullying had been an issue within the school;• It was reported that homework was not being set and marked regularly;• Some parents were so concerned that they had resorted to paying for private tuition for their children;• Parents had not been kept apprised of the situation regarding the Head Teacher. Petitioners felt that better communication would have left parents

feeling more confident and valued;

- It was felt that some parents had been disregarded as English was not their first language. No clear complaints process was in place at the time.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services requested clarification on a number of points. Petitioners were asked whether they now felt valued and listened to; it was reported that communication had improved and a meeting with the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors had been held the previous week to discuss parents' concerns.

Further clarification was requested regarding the matter of homework. It was confirmed that homework was now being set regularly which was a positive development.

The petitioners commented that they felt the school had lacked aspiration and that the more able children were sometimes overlooked. It was pointed out that the role of parents was to support their children but private tuition should not be a necessity. Parents reported that things were changing slowly but the rate of change needed to be accelerated.

The Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services acknowledged that the school had experienced some difficulties. He expressed his gratitude to the petitioners for raising their concerns and for attending the hearing to explain how things were improving at the school. It was confirmed that a new and permanent Governing Body had now been appointed at the school, a new permanent Head Teacher was in place and staffing was complete.

RESOLVED That: the Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services:

1. Listened to the concerns of residents regarding Minet Junior School;
2. Noted the intervention action the Council had taken to improve the leadership and governance of the school;
3. Noted that the Council would continue to monitor the school closely and would not hesitate to take further intervention action should this be required;
4. Noted residents' comments regarding the need for improved aspiration within the school.