
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES – EDUCATION STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2017-18

Report by Service Director, Children & Young People

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

2 October 2018

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **The report provides the Executive Committee with a summary of progress in Educational standards of attainment and achievement across early years settings, additional support needs provisions and schools in the Scottish Borders.**
- 1.2 The report also presents a summary of progress in relation to the expectations set out in the National Improvement Framework (NIF) which sets out the national priorities for Education and expectations regarding the key drivers of improvement: school leadership, teacher professionalism, parental engagement, assessment of children's progress, school improvement and performance information. The key priorities for school session 2018/2019 are set out within the drivers and these set the context within which all education settings base their improvement plans.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Executive Committee:-**
- (a) **Note the overall positive progress being made by the Education Service in delivering the National Improvement Framework in Scottish Borders Council Early Years settings and schools.**
 - (b) **Agree the improvement priorities and action plan for improvement in school session 2018/19, as detailed in Section 5 in Appendix 1.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 All Scottish Borders Council education establishments have been focused on the key priorities set within the National Improvement Framework (NIF):
- (a) Improving attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy;
 - (b) 'Closing the attainment gap' between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people;
 - (c) Improving children and young people's health and well-being;
 - (d) Improving employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people.
- 3.2 The progress made in school session in 2017-2018 is contained within the Education Standards and Quality Report in Appendix 1. It is important to note that there is a legislative requirement to report on progress within the NIF on an annual basis to the Scottish Government and to set out the improvement plan priorities for the year ahead within the nationally established key drivers for improvement: teacher professionalism, school improvement, leadership, assessment of children's progress and performance information. These drivers provide a framework for the Council's Education Service Improvement Plan, including the identification of measureable outcomes and the evidence that will be gathered to inform progress and support strategic planning for continuous improvement.

4 SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

- 4.1 ***Improving attainment in literacy and numeracy*** – Standards have been maintained across all aspects and school stages, ie there are positive attainment trends in both areas. For school leavers, significant improvement has been evidenced with an increase of over 4% in National 5 English and an increase of 3% of S4 pupils achieving a literacy award; an increase of 9% in National 5 Maths and an increase of 4.5% S4 pupils achieving a numeracy award.
- 4.2 ***'Closing the attainment gap'*** – Overall progress in attainment has improved with performance in the highest 20% of pupils and the middle 60% of pupils being greater than the virtual comparator and national. However, attainment of pupils in deciles 1 and 2 is lower than the national picture. At school level there is significant evidence of the attainment gap being closed within the Broad General Education, but extensive work remains in improving the attainment of pupils in deciles 1 and 2 in examinations in the Senior Phase. Every school in the Borders has a 'closing the gap' attainment action plan and a 'virtual school' has been established to track and monitor the impact of targeted actions upon the progress of pupils in deciles 1 and 2. Strategically actions have been identified to tackle particular work to address key areas where the attainment gap is most persistent: writing and numeracy in Primary 4 and all aspects of literacy and numeracy in Primary 7.

- 4.3 ***Improving children and young people's health and well-being*** – There has been an extensive focus on improving inclusion, equality and health and well-being in all Scottish Borders education settings. This is detailed on page 26 of the Standards and Quality Report in Appendix 1. A wellbeing survey was undertaken with all S2 pupils and all primary school pupils from Primary 3 to 7. This survey will now provide an opportunity to track progress in this area and support the identification of key actions to be taken to further enhance wellbeing of pupils. It should be noted that a further report on the work being carried out in this area will be presented at a forthcoming Executive.
- 4.4 ***Improvement in employability skills*** – Positive and sustained destinations continue to improve year upon year in the Scottish Borders: 95.83% of school leavers in 2016/17 were in a positive destination and this was more than 2% above the national average. Extensive partnership working is ongoing to ensure that destinations are aspirational and tailor made to the needs of the young person. The report in Appendix 1 evidences increased partnership working and participation levels both within the senior phase of school and post school for 16-19 year olds. The support of Community Learning and Development and a wide range of local partnerships, including the work in progress linked to the South of Scotland Partnership and Borderlands, ie the links to Economic Development, are vital to the ambition of ensuring all young people attain the best possible, positive and sustained destinations.

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The Education Standards and Quality Report for 2017/2018 evidences positive progress in the four National Improvement Framework priorities. These priorities are also impacted upon positively by a range of improvement approaches being taken in collaboration with a range of partners, eg Mental and Emotional Health Strategy with the NHS. A report on progress in partnership working will be outlined in a paper to the Executive later in the year when the updated Children and Young People's Partnership Plan is brought to the Executive.

6 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial

There are no costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.

6.2 Risk and Mitigations

A risk register is in place for the Education Service, with risks identified and managed following the Corporate Risk Management Policy and framework. Controls are in place for these risks and further mitigation actions identified as necessary to ensure the achievement of these priorities.

6.3 Equalities

It is anticipated that there are no adverse impact due to race, disability,

gender, age, sexual orientation or religion/belief arising from the proposals in this report.

6.4 Acting Sustainably

There are no significant impacts on the economy, community or environment arising from the proposals contained in this report.

6.5 Carbon Management

There are no significant effects on carbon emissions arising from the proposals contained in this report.

6.6 Rural Proofing

This report does not relate to new or amended policy or strategy and as a result rural proofing is not an applicable consideration.

6.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes to be made to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals contained in this report.

7 CONSULTATION

7.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Service Director HR and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and their comments have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

Donna Manson

Service Director, Children & Young People Signature

Author(s)

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Appendix: Standards and Quality Report (Appendix 1)

Background Papers:

Previous Minute Reference:

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Michelle Strong can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact Michelle Strong (Tel 01835 824000) at Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells, Melrose TD6 0SA.