

By: Mr Mike Whiting, Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills

To: County Council – 19 July 2012

Subject: Select Committee: Kent Children's Future at Key Stage 2

Summary: To comment on and endorse the report of the Select Committee on attainment at Key stage Two.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Scrutiny Board (As was prior to new governance arrangements) agreed a proposal to establish a Select Committee to look at reasons for variations of attainment at Key Stage 2. The Committee set out to determine what might explain the variation in results at KS2 and the factors which have enabled some schools to have seemingly broken the link between predictors of poor attainment (such as deprivation) and actual poor attainment.

1.2 The KS2 report was shared with the Cabinet Member, Corporate Director of ELS, and Head of Standards and Improvement on 2 April 2012 and was considered at Cabinet on 14th May 2012.

2. Select Committee

2.1 Membership

The Chairman of the Select Committee was Mr Chris Wells, other members being Mrs Penny Cole, Mr Harold Craske, Mr Peter Homewood, Mr Richard Parry, Mr Leyland Ridings MBE, Mr Kit Smith, Mr Martin Vye.

2.2 Terms of Reference

The agreed Terms of Reference were

To examine the reasons for variations in KS2 performance of all Kent schools with a focus to those schools in areas of deprivation.

The report

- examines levels of attainment at KS2 by providing a detailed quantitative overview of current performance across the County.
- describes the nationally agreed factors that contribute to differential achievement in deprived areas and how those factors impact on a child's individual attainment and on overall school performance
- and asks how some schools have seemingly broken this link between deprivation and poor attainment, exploring what measures have been put in place in schools and their surrounding communities to mitigate the effects of disadvantage or low attainment.

2.3 The report considers the impact of deprivation on attainment and to what extent factors about Schools, Pupils, Parents, and Communities/localities have impacted on Key Stage 2 performance. It considers the role of KCC in the future within a fast changing environment, and the Government policy agenda. The factors considered include:

- the impact of **Deprivation**
- **performance** at KS2 in Kent and compared to other local authorities with similar proportions of pupils eligible for FSM
- **factors about Schools** including Quality of teaching, Quality of leadership, Aspirations and expectations for pupils, Assessment Systems, Quality of Pastoral care and the engagement of governors.
- **factors about Pupils** including Attendance, Behaviour, Aspirations, prior attainment
- **factors about Parents** including pupil mobility, engagement and relationships with parents, parents aspirations for children
- **factors about communities and localities** including concentrations of deprivation

2.4 Evidence

The Committee used a number of evidence sources to inform its investigations, including:

- a) Quantitative Overview to analyze Kent Key Stage 2 performance data
- b) Comparison of Kent to Statistical neighbours and other authorities
- c) National research on factors that contribute to differential achievement in schools and specifically in deprived areas.
- d) Information and insights from briefings and discussion with key stakeholders including Preventative Service Managers, District Heads (now Kent Challenge Lead Advisors, Education Welfare Officers, KCC Education service leads)
- e) Analysis of KS2 Attainment data to identify a final study group of schools. The final study group focused mainly on schools with High levels of FSM and IMD that were doing well, and also schools with high levels of FSM that were consistently well below floor targets.
- f) Interrogation and analysis of Ofsted reports for comments that highlight factors contributing to improving outcomes or inhibited effective learning, these were then themed.
- g) Evidence gathered from visits to study group schools from Chair of Governors, Headteachers and Key Stage 2 teachers.
- h) Insights gathered from focus groups and activities with parents and children.
- i) Consideration of overview of the future role of KCC in a changing landscape.

2.5 The Full report

An Executive Summary of the report is attached at Appendix 1.

A copy of the full report and key findings is available online at www.kent.gov.uk/your_council/how_the_council_works/decisions/overview_and_scrutiny/select_committee_reports.aspx , or please contact Democratic Services, Tel: 01622 694269.

3. Conclusion

3.1 We welcome the report and would like to congratulate the Select Committee on completing this challenging piece of work.

3.2 We would also like to thank all those witnesses, particularly Headteachers, Chairs of Governors and teachers, who gave evidence to the Select Committee and the officers who supported it.

3.3 Mr Chris Wells, Select Committee Chairman and Mr Martin Vye will present the report to County Council.

4. Recommendations

We recommend that:-

- (a) the Select Committee report be endorsed by the County Council;
- (b) the Select Committee be thanked for a useful, relevant and balanced report on a complex and challenging issue; and
- (c) the witnesses and others who provided evidence and made valuable contributions to the work of the Select Committee be thanked.

Background Information: *None*

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