

Select Committee - Grammar Schools and Social Mobility

12 February 2016

Biography

Matthew Bartlett - Headteacher – Dover Girls Grammar School for Girls and Harvey Grammar School, Folkestone

Matthew Bartlett was educated at Jesus College, Cambridge where he read History and after working for Price Waterhouse, trained to teach at Trevelyan College, Durham. He has taught history in both the maintained and independent sector, including Head of Department at Nottingham High School, Deputy Head at St Bede's College, Manchester and since January 2011 has been Headteacher at Dover Grammar School for Girls. This selective grammar school, rated as Outstanding by Ofsted both in 2007 and then in November 2013 under his leadership, has some 859 students, including a mixed Sixth Form of 222.

Matthew sits on the South Area Board member of the Kent Association of Headteachers, is on the National Steering Committee for the Grammar School Heads Association and is Secretary to the Kent and Medway Grammar School Association. Since early 2015, he has been a National Leader of Education and is currently a governor of two schools both very different from his own, including a unit for students with profound behavioural needs. He is passionate about social mobility and about raising aspirations for those from vulnerable groups.

His school was named as one of the most efficient in the country by the DfE in 2013, received 5 awards from the Good Schools Guide in 2015, was named in 2014 by Sir Michael Wilshaw as one of the top providers in his annual report, and in late 2015 was rated as the 194th best school in the UK by the Sunday Times Parent Power survey. Most recently in January 2016, the Daily Telegraph has ranked the school as 33rd best in the UK for A level results by point score per student. Similarly Kent on Sunday commented on 24th January 2016, 'Dover Grammar School for Girls: the highest performing school in Kent at A level, by point score per student comes above all the prestigious and super-selective grammar schools.'

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Hearing 5: Friday 12th February 2016

Witness Guide for Members

Below are suggested themes and questions. They have been provided in advance to the witnesses to allow them to prepare for the types of issues that Members may be interested to explore. All Members are welcome to ask these questions or pose additional ones to the witnesses via the Committee Chairman.

Themes and Questions

Matthew Bartlett - Headteacher – Dover Girls Grammar School for Girls and Harvey Grammar School, Folkestone

- Please introduce yourselves and provide an outline of the responsibilities of your post.
- Please could you provide a brief overview of your school and in particular how many FSM children currently attend?
- To what extent does your school's intake reflect the local community or is there a particularly wide catchment area?
- Sutton Trust research has reported that parents from disadvantaged backgrounds often associate grammar schools with tradition, middle class values and elitism, creating a social rather than an educational barrier to make them reluctant to send their children to the local grammar. Do you think this is true and if so, what actions have you taken to tackle this perception?
- What are the main barriers to increasing the numbers of young people on FSM attending grammar schools? What do you think could be done about these barriers?
- Does your grammar school's admission criteria give preference to FSM children? Why have you chosen to select in a particular way? What impact could changes to admissions criteria have on raising the number of FSM children?
- Do we need a quota for FSM children in grammar schools to improve access for this group?
- What is the impact of school partnerships and Multi-Academy Trusts? Does this relationship between schools influence the destinations of children in a partnership or MAT primary school?
- What relationships does your grammar school have with the local primary schools and do these partnerships work to increase the number of disadvantaged children taking and passing the Kent Test?
- Does your school engage with parents of high achieving FSM children whilst they are in primary school?

- Given that admissions criteria prioritise Children in Care why are the numbers which apply and get into grammar schools so low?
- How are children from disadvantaged backgrounds supported to achieve once they get into Grammar school? For example, how are you using Pupil Premium funding and what impact has this had on FSM and CIC children's attainment levels?
- Would you consider allocating part of the Pupil Premium for FSM pupils towards a bursary to encourage more lower income families to support their children to enter the Kent Test and go on to grammar school?
- Our data shows that children from disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to progress into sixth form at grammar school than their peers. They are also much less likely to access higher education. Why is this and what can be done to improve this?
- What one thing would you do to increase the number of FSM children attending grammar schools in Kent?
- Are there any other issues that you would like to raise with the Committee?