

SSSAB Newsletter

Solihull Schools' Strategic Accountability Board

Strategic Plan Update

- Seven schools had requested a peer to peer review during the Summer Term. SSSAB agreed to pay towards backfill for staff supporting peer to peer reviews.
- Consideration needs to be given to the future of reviews. Colleagues had been involved in a more collegiate approach where schools work together and pay for a facilitator to carry out the work. To be discussed further at the next meeting.
- Clair McNeill and Louise Minter are working on ways to support newly appointed Headteachers.

Early Years & Nursery Admissions Review

Lois Brough and Ann Pearson gave an update. Since the introduction of 30 hours, many school nursery units had found they had vacancies and parents had found the application process overly complicated. Nursery attendance is non-statutory and therefore not required to be included in Solihull's admission arrangements document. They can be as flexible as they want and the Admissions Team could potentially support schools in removing barriers. It was agreed that Lois and Ann would visit forthcoming collaborative meetings to discuss this with schools.

Feedback from Working Groups

- Heads Conference and Ed SEND had been focussing on the issue of children attending school out of borough. The projected total cost to the LA should be transparent and if schools were to receive some of that money they would be able to support children who would otherwise go out of borough.
- Sally Hodges reported that the LA is trying to establish an additional autism centre of excellence that would support mainstream and have a function around training support staff across the whole system. It was agreed that Sally could work through SSSAB for help with the autism centre.
- It came out strongly at Heads Conference that whilst most schools are committed to SEND children some schools still turn them away and it was felt that these schools were getting away without being challenged. The Ed SEND Task and Finish Group would be discussing the possibility of setting up a virtual governing body for SEND through which the challenge could come along with the Head of Service.
- It was acknowledged that the EHCP process has been very slow due to the number of conversions that had to be made by the end of March 2018.
- Feedback from Heads' Conference was good. It was agreed to book the same venue for 2019.



Monitoring Statement

- The venue for a Deputy Heads' Conference had been reserved in October 2018 and will be funded out of SSSAB or Heads Partnership.
- There will be a second round of Mental Health First Aid training for schools that were unable to attend the first round. It was agreed that SSSAB would fund one place of the two available for each of those schools as the first round had been free (funded through the Transformation Plan).

Update from Councillor Ken Meeson

- Cllr Meeson gave an overview of the role of the School Admissions Advisory Group of which he is a member.
- The response from the consultation around merging Chapel Fields Junior School and Daylesford Infant School had been received and this has now gone to statutory consultation.
- The tender for the re-building of Yorkswood Primary School has been signed off.
- Cllr Meeson had challenged an article in the Solihull News stating that the borough had the highest proportion of failed children's homes as Solihull does not have any. He is now pursuing a formal complaint.

Update from the Director of Children's Services and Skills

- Solihull Soroptimists were keen to run an event in primary schools called Skirting Science next year.
- A piece of work has commenced around shaping an alternative curriculum for children who are disaffected.

Public Health Update

- Solihull have been successful in a joint bid to become a Sport England pilot for tackling inactivity in Solihull.
- There was a discussion about the ASQ at 2-2½ and more children starting school who are not ready.
- Public Health are a pilot for a peer led parenting approach called EPEC (Empowering Parents Empowering Communities).

LA Update

- The possibility of a science day is being explored.
- A collaborative between Coventry, Solihull, Warwickshire & Worcestershire is submitting a bid focussed on SEND from the Schools Strategic Improvement Fund.