

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CABINET: 17TH OCTOBER, 2016

REFERENCE FROM LEARNING AND CULTURE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
19TH SEPTEMBER, 2016

“338 INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL PERFORMANCE PROGRESS PANEL MEETING
(MD) –

The report detailed the outcome of a School Progress Panel meeting that had been held at Fairfield Primary School on 22nd June, 2016.

The Chairman, in presenting the report, gave thanks to the Members of the Panel and the officers who had been in attendance, it also being noted that the Cabinet Member, Councillor Burnett, had also been present at that meeting.

The report outlined that the need for individual School Progress Panel meetings can be triggered by a number of events such as the publication of weak results in external examinations, the outcome of an Estyn inspection placing a school in a statutory category or the outcome of national categorisation process identifying that the school is in need of higher levels of support in order to improve.

In April 2016 Cabinet had received a report and agreed that a Scrutiny Committee School Progress Panel be established for Fairfield Primary School due to the fact that although many positive aspects had been identified, further development needs had been identified.

At the Panel meeting the Headteacher relayed that since 2011 the number of pupils on the school roll had increased from 202 to the current level of 292. Of note was the fact that for the school, many children often arrived at Year 6, whereas for other schools most pupils arrived at Nursery. Pupil transition from Nursery was therefore considered a challenge for the school.

It was highlighted that Fairfield Primary School did not have its own Nursery provision and this meant that the school was not always fully aware of the numbers coming into the Reception Year and that they came from several different Nursery provisions. Therefore, within the school, social relationships had to be a focus on entry to Fairfield as they were not coming from one Nursery in which pupils would already know one another. The school had also recognised that a number of children came from out of area and in some instances the level of social skills was very low, so the starting point for some of the pupils varied, with children possessing varying degrees of social skills and mobility. The Headteacher had advised that difficulties also existed due to the various approaches to learning undertaken by a

number of Nurseries within the area. The school had found it difficult to access information on pupils from out of catchment or county. Therefore, the school sometimes had gaps in knowledge background of pupils and the school considered that the free flow of communication could be improved. The Panel was informed that out of the 43 children within the current Reception Year, the school considered that 30 pupils had the necessary core data with them on arrival from the respective Nurseries.

The Panel was made aware that the catchment area of the school was quite small and pupils came into the school from a diverse range of backgrounds and communities.

In relation to 2016 outcomes for the Foundation Phase, it was noted that three pupils had not achieved the Foundation Phase Outcome 5+. This was due to their special educational needs and also issues around attendance. The school had been able to work closely with these individual pupils and they had been supported through several interventions.

An analysis carried out by the school during 2015 of the Foundation Phase, identified that the number of children attaining Outcome 5 had increased over the past three years across Language, Literature and Communication (LLC), Mathematical Development (MD) and also Personal and Social Education (PSE). In addition, the school advised that boys were performing in line with girls for all subject areas and the school compared favourably to its family and to the Local Authority averages.

Improving the attainment levels for pupils entitled to free school meals (FSM) was a specific area of development for the school. It had been identified that non FSM pupils were outperforming FSM pupils in most areas. In detailing progress, the Challenge Advisor explained that performance of FSM pupils was improving, but the small number of pupils did make the data unreliable. In the Foundation Phase for 2016, there were only four pupils on the FSM register, while at Key Stage 2, there was only one FSM pupil on the register.

In terms of pupil attendance, although this had increased over time, in 2015 the school had dropped into benchmark quarter 4. During that year, the school exceeded the attendance target of 94.9% by 0.9%, which had been impacted by four children. In order to support these families, referrals had been made to the Educational Welfare Officer. The school had also introduced the Callio system which had resulted in improvement.

The Challenge Advisor outlined progress in relation to leadership and teaching and he confirmed that progress had been made in most areas and at both Key Stages, particularly at the higher levels. Pupil level data indicated that all Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils had made at least two levels of progress between Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2, with some making three levels of progress. The Challenge Advisor also reported that, although a variety of assessment for learning strategies were being carried out, the evidence suggested that these could be further

developed. In addition, the school would further evaluate the impact of its strategy for FSM pupils.

The Chairman advised that there was a high proportion of SEN needs and that progress had been made with the Callio project in relation to the school improvement plan. A school's Standards Committee was a fairly new role and the Governing Body had also identified a number of other committees by establishing a new structure that included three new sub-committees, Standards, Provision, and Leadership and Management. The Panel was particularly keen to request that Governors undertake learning walks and the Chairman stressed these provided Governors with essential information and detail of school learning as part of the improvement agenda. Governors were also keen for the school to promote itself wider in the community and to consider further data analysis of the common cohort.

Overall the Panel had considered that the school was working hard but that there was still some work to do.

The Head of Service also reiterated that an important factor for the school was that the Governing Body was improving its self-evaluation and was challenging its own performance. The Cabinet Member concurred that all Governing Bodies had to be strong in self-evaluation and they also had to become increasingly skilled.

The Chairman concluded by advising that the Panel had considered that it would be important to undertake a follow up visit to the school following the publication of the school's categorisation and benchmarking positions and would therefore recommend Cabinet to agree a visit is arranged.

Following the presentation of the report by the Chairman, it was subsequently

RECOMMENDED –

- (1) T H A T the Scrutiny Progress Panel findings as detailed in paragraphs 38 to 41 of the report be accepted.
- (2) T H A T the report be referred to Cabinet for consideration and / or approval.
- (3) T H A T Cabinet be requested to consider approving a follow up visit by the School Progress Panel within the next six months following publication of the progress in the Foundation Phase and Key Stage 2, together with school categorisation and benchmarking details.

Reasons for recommendations

- (1) To apprise Committee of the findings of the Progress Panel.
- (2) For Cabinet's consideration.

(3) For Cabinet’s consideration following the publication of the documents outlined above.”

Attached as Appendix – [Report to Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee: 19th September, 2016](#)