

The Vale of Glamorgan Council

Cabinet Meeting: 31 October, 2016

Report of the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Education

Individual Schools Progress Panel - High Street Primary School

Purpose of the Report

1. To respond to a Cabinet decision regarding proposed individual school progress meetings.

Recommendation

1. To resolve that an individual school progress panel for High Street Primary School is no longer required.

Reason for the Recommendation

1. In view of the actions already undertaken in relation to High Street Primary School and in order to allow the school the opportunity to continue making improvement without the necessity for individual school progress panel meetings with the Scrutiny Committee.

Background

2. At the Cabinet meeting of 7 March 2016, Members considered a referral from the Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee of the report 'National Categorisation - outcomes for Vale schools'. The referral included a recommendation 'that a progress panel meeting at High Street Primary School be conducted' and 'that a programme of work in respect of this recommendation (and one other) be presented for consideration by the Committee'.
3. On 25 April, Cabinet requested that the Scrutiny Committee (Lifelong Learning) conducted an individual school progress panel at High Street Primary School.
4. In making this recommendation, the Scrutiny Committee had noted that High Street Primary School had remained in the amber support category with the capacity to improve changing from a B to a C.

Relevant Issues and Options

5. While much work remains in High Street in order to improve outcomes for pupils, the following actions have been implemented, all of which are considered appropriate to improving standards and the improvement capacity of the school:
- An acting headteacher was appointed to the school from 1 September. She has communicated a clear vision for improvement and all staff have worked with her in agreeing a new mission statement for the school.
 - All staff have been made aware of the concerns surrounding the school's performance and ability to bring about improvement, and have welcomed the changes proposed by the acting headteacher.
 - A new school improvement plan (SIP) has been drafted in consultation with the school's Challenge Adviser. This reflects the school's current position very well and the identified priorities for improvement are appropriate.
 - An annual monitoring cycle has been introduced and welcomed by all staff.
 - A calendar of professional development opportunities has been compiled. All activities clearly link to the SIP. All staff now have access to high quality continual professional development opportunities.
 - Staff have been given opportunities to visit other schools to observe best practice.
 - The school has been linked with a pathfinder primary school in Bridgend in order to support the Foundation Phase which is in need of significant improvement and also to develop leadership capacity among middle leaders.
 - The governing body has agreed to refurbish all classrooms in order to provide a learning environment that is fit for purpose.
 - A new marking policy has been introduced and is followed by all staff.
 - Lesson observations and book scrutiny exercises have been undertaken.
 - While the national categorisation has not yet been published, the school has provisionally been placed in a red support category. This will result in half termly progress meetings where the acting headteacher and school leaders, along with the Chair of Governors and Challenge Adviser, will report on progress against the SIP to the Lead Officer for School Improvement and other local authority officers.
6. As a consequence of all the above, it is considered that conducting a School Progress Panel Visit at this time is inappropriate. It is therefore recommended that in view of the actions undertaken, as noted above, the school continues to be afforded the opportunity to make improvement.

Resource Implications (Financial and Employment)

7. None arising from this report.

Sustainability and Climate Change Implications

8. None arising from this report.

Legal Implications (to Include Human Rights Implications)

9. None arising from this report.

Crime and Disorder Implications

10. None arising from this report.

Equal Opportunities Implications (to include Welsh Language issues)

11. The progress of learners and in particular those most vulnerable to underachievement including pupils who are entitled to free school meals is included in school assessment.

Corporate/Service Objectives

12. Improving outcomes and wellbeing for all learners.

Policy Framework and Budget

13. The recommendations of this report are within existing policy framework and budget.

Consultation (including Ward Member Consultation)

14. Not applicable

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

15. Learning and Culture.

Background Papers

None

Contact Officer

Morwen Hudson, Senior Challenge Adviser and Lead Officer for School Improvement

Officers Consulted

None.

Responsible Officer:

Paula Ham, Interim Director of Learning and Skills