

Starbeck CP School Parents / Carers Meeting

Notes of Meeting 15th June 2017

Present:

Tim Redshaw - Vice Chair of Governors

Garry de Castro Morland – Acting Headteacher

Andy Lancashire – Principal Adviser Early Years & Primary NYCC Education & Skills

Matt Blyton – Lead Improvement Adviser NYCC Education & Skills

Teaching staff – Starbeck School

Parents and carers of students

Areas of Discussion:

- **Key Findings of the Inspection Report**
- **Statutory Guidance for Schools in Special Measures**
- **Local Authority Plan to support Starbeck**
- **Next Steps**
- **Questions from Parents and Carers**
- **Acting Headteacher Closing Address**

Key Findings of the inspection

The findings of the report were discussed in detail.

Positives aspects of the report focused on:

How children in the early years had made good progress, which provided a strong foundation to build upon and how this needed to be consistent throughout all of the years.

How impressive the conduct and behaviour of students was in and around school.

Recent improvements in KS2 had positively impacted on students, especially in reading.

How improvements in phonics was supporting pupils with reading accuracy.

The negative aspects of the inspection included:

How students did not make adequate progress over KS1 & KS2 particularly in writing and mathematics and for disadvantaged learners.

Students in Year 6 reaching the expected standard for their age was low.

Teaching overall and over time is judged as inadequate.

Some teachers' expectations are too low and students are not always given work which matches their ability.

Progression is slow.

Lesson time is not always used effectively.

Attendance of disadvantaged students is too low and not improving quickly enough.

Leaders and middle leaders have lacked clarity, have not monitored and tracked progress, failed to identify emerging issues quickly enough and have not improved student outcomes at a fast enough rate.

Information provided by the leadership team to governors has not enabled them to hold leaders to account for the performance of the school.

Some underachieving students have been inaccurately labelled as having special educational needs.

Statutory Guidance for Schools in Special Measures

Starbeck is eligible for intervention via 2 tiers - Local Authority and Department of Education Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC)

As of April 2017 there are two options for Starbeck:

School Closure

School to become sponsored academy which is the option that is being progressed.

The Local Authority is keen to identify a local solution and via RSC consultation is looking to identify an academy trust to sponsor the school.

There are no statutory timescales for the identification of a sponsor and conversion but an example of 6-9 months was provided if a local solution was sourced. The process of 'due diligence' was explained.

Local Authority Plan to support Starbeck

A Statement of Action containing a support plan will be drawn up now that the report has been published. Elements of this will include:

- Strengthen leadership and teaching at Starbeck:

Garry de Castro Morland has been appointed as Acting Head. He will remain in position until at least December 2017. Current Head Carolyn Sandford is currently on sick leave until 18 July 2017. Her position following this is unknown at present time.

- Sustained and enhanced local authority advisory support:

The Local Authority remains responsible for the outcome of Starbeck's students with oversight of this remaining when the school becomes a sponsored academy.

- Teachers and Teaching Assistants working within an identified framework and support plan to strengthen teaching across the whole of the school.
- Discussions with the DfE (RSC):

Identification of an academy sponsor which provides a local solution.

Next Steps

Improve leadership and management.

Improve the quality of teaching to ensure that all students including the most able and disadvantaged make good progress.

Improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils so it is in line with other pupils nationally.

Ensure that a Statement of Action is in place with milestones for governors to evaluate progress.

Discuss with RSC the proposals on academy sponsorship.

Ensure that a Parent Forum is in place, which enables parents to seek feedback on improvements and progression plans and measures.

Regular Local Authority monitoring visits.

Questions from Parents and Carers:

Q: "Will the existing head return to the school when her sickness absence is over?"

A: "The position of Carolyn Sandford has been explained – she is on sick leave until the 18th July. The acting Head Garry de Castro Morland will remain in post until Christmas 2017 in the first instance."

Q: "Why was the school left to get into this state?"

A: "It has never been 'left'. Staff absence, a failure in leadership and governor turbulence were all contributory factors. Subsequently, the situation was not monitored and planning and contingency measures were slow to be put into place. Considerable local authority support was provided but the full scale of the problems was not evident initially but impact is being seen."

Q: "How is children's progress being monitored?"

A: "Key staff have been identified to address assessment and monitoring systems which will track the progress made by students"

Q: "Why didn't the governors know about the school's situation?"

A: "Information provided by leadership to the governing body did not highlight the issues and situation clearly enough. All information provided by leadership needs to be transparent and clear"

Q: "What will happen if no sponsor is identified?"

A: "The school will continue under the jurisdiction of the local authority who has put measures in place to make good progress within school"

Q: "When Starbeck becomes an academy will the school be subject to another Ofsted Inspection within 3 years?"

A: "The previous Ofsted report is not carried forward. The formation of an academy is a new start. The local authority has to prepare a statement of action and submit to Ofsted who will look at it, decide if it is fit for purpose and action a HMI visit to assess progress. There is no timescale available although academies are inspected within three years of being formed."

Q: "What is the local authority doing to improve and monitor the performance of the governing body?"

A: "The local authority will continue to assess the performance and actions of the governing body before any further intervention is made. The local authority has powers to manage budgets, appoint additional governors and in extreme situations request an IEB (Interim Executive Board) which effectively replaces the governing body. This has to be agreed by the RSC (Regional Schools Commissioner)"

Q: "Why don't parents receive any mock exam or test results? We have no idea how well or badly our children are doing"

A: "The acting head has already identified that this is an issue which would benefit from discussion at the Parents' Forum. Discussions need to take place to decide upon how and how often parents would like to receive information"

Q: "Will afterschool child care provisions be introduced at Starbeck in the near future?"

A: "Yes. It's on the action list"

Q: "Is it too late for my child who's entering Year 6 in September? When will the inadequate assessments be turned around?"

A: "Inadequate assessments will not remain. They will improve quickly. It is not too late for Year 6 students and interventions will be put in place. Barriers to learning will be removed, students and staff will have clear aspirations, models and guidance. Parents and carers can be reassured that actions will be swift and consistent"

Q: "Will additional tutor sessions in English and maths be available for struggling students to help them achieve their potential and bring them up to the required standards?"

A: "The school is looking at identifying interventions which will be measured and evidence based to accelerate progress accurately. Booster groups will be available in a range of mediums from September 2017 and may happen before school as well as during school time but dependent on the needs identified for each year group. After-school sessions are not as productive when children are tired etc.

Q: "Why does Starbeck have to move from a local authority to an academy school?"

A: "The move to an academy is a legal requirement. As of 15 March 2015 any school placed in special measures must become an academy. Reassurances to parents and carers that the change is structural, the leadership and management of the school will improve and the trust has the capacity to improve the school"

Q: "Who are the governors accountable to?"

A: "The local authority or trustees once in a MAT"

Q: "What are the school's plans to gain the confidence of the community for future intakes?"

A: "Rebuild trust and belief in the community. Results can change and the school will be able to demonstrate and show how much progress they have made. The school will be promoted and marketing and communications are vital in order to re-establish Starbeck's reputation"

Q: "Will adequate funding be available for future years if numbers drop?"

A: "There will be some funding support through the LA's Statement of Action, but overall income will be affected if numbers fall."

Q: "My child needs to do homework and it's not given out"

A: "This type of discussion will be one which is suited to the Parents' Forum. The formation of this group is high on the agenda and is being progressed by the Head, who asked parents and carers: what do you want? Reflect on what you think is needed and helpful and let me know your thoughts"

Q: "What will happen in respect of school leadership after December 2017? Is there any flexibility in the current package?"

A: "The local authority and head are not in a position to be able to advise on this at the moment but all agree that strong leadership and management at Starbeck, which is consistent and progressive, is vital"

Q: "The Ofsted report was very negative about staff. There was no reflection of the excellent work they do and that overall the staff at Starbeck are great"

A: Ofsted use a very narrow framework and focus on core subjects. There are lots of very positive things about Starbeck. It was acknowledged that the report was a disappointment and had caused considerable upset and grief, but matters are being addressed and the focus is on improvement. It was noted that the LA review was undertaken 5 working days before the inspection. The LA's view during this review was that the external support is beginning to have an impact but that the school still requires significant improvement and some further time for these improvements to be reflected in end of Key Stage pupil outcomes.

Acting Headteacher Closing Address:

"Starbeck was the school I attended between the ages of 5 and 11 years. It is a place which is close to my heart. I have been here 2 weeks as acting head and I hope that you will have been able to see me present and around the school. If you have any concerns, please talk to me. I am available and approachable.

There are lots of changes and developments needed but I am working with an excellent hardworking team of staff who I need to ensure are given the opportunity to lead their students and move forward, looking at aims,

objectives and action plans. The groundwork has been done for the school development plan and the key priorities have been completed.

Communication is the key, so the Parents' Forum is something I am keen to implement. The student council and governors and parent meetings will all help to keep the lines of communication open so all parties are clear on how progress is being made." Garry de Castro Morland