



A brighter future for Nottingham children

Education Improvement Board

Minutes of the Meeting of the Education Improvement Board of 21 March 2018.

Present:

David Anstead (DA)
Andy Burns (AB)
Phillip Burton (PB)
Jon Collins (JC)
John Dexter (JDe)
John Dyson (JDy)
Graham Feek (GF)
Pat Fielding (PF)
David Greenaway (DG)
Chris Hall (CH)
Sian Hampton (SH)
Yultan Mellor (YM)
Alison Michalska (AM)
Matt Varley (MV)
Sam Webster (SW)

Apologies: Kevin Fear, Jen Hardy, Matt Lawrence, Carol Norman, Dave Hooker and Wayne Norrie (who was represented by Graham Feek)

Sir David welcomed Phillip Burton, DAISI, Isabella Kisielowska (who has taken over from Jen Hardy) and Graham Feek, Greenwood Academies Trust.

1) The minutes of the last meeting of 22 November 2017 were accepted as a correct record.

2) Matters arising and Chair's update.

- The primary and secondary priorities identified from the 2017 outcomes data at the last board meeting have been included in the strategic plan (see item 4).
- JDe reported the new secondary headteachers group has now met twice. There are a number of new headteachers in post. Employability, inclusion and the city's data were discussed. The group will begin to commission work shortly. SSIF bids for literacy and numeracy were successful which will bring significant additional funding into city schools. Further bids are being developed including one in conjunction with Derby City around reducing the use of exclusion.
- SW outlined a joint employability event that is being planned with Derby City.
- DG has requested the regional schools commissioner attends a future meeting. Amanda Spielman HMCI and Conor Ryan of the Sutton Trust will be attending the next EIB meeting in July.

3) Standing Items:

- CH updated EIB on business sub-group meetings since the last EIB. Projects commissioned by the EIB have been evaluated and the contract with Thistley Hough Academy (English and mathematics support) and with Nadia Callow Hussain (science strand lead) have been renewed. New projects include a coaching project for science teachers to be managed by Nadia. The city's science teachers requested EIB pump

prime the purchase of some additional teaching resources (GCSE pods) which was agreed. A proposal from DAISI for secondary subject analysis was agreed but with some reservations, due to the variable take up of the reports provided across the city. Projects still to be commissioned include one aimed at raising white boys' achievement.

- The future of the recruitment and retention sub-group was considered. Jen Hardy was asked at the last EIB to approach 19 MATs in the city about their view of this strand of the EIB's work. She also approached other cities to enquire about their approaches to recruitment and retention. The feedback suggests there isn't much enthusiasm amongst Nottingham school leaders for EIB to continue this work. Some cities (eg Derby) are involved in a DfE pilot project for 'writing off' student loans. If this project has impact, EIB agreed that our politicians should press DfE for Nottingham to be included in the future. AM offered to approach colleagues in the pilot areas to seek feedback from them on their plans for implementation and for details of any impact of this initiative. **Action: Alison Michalska.**
- EIB agreed to cease the recruitment and retention strand work apart from continuing to maintain the 'teach Nottingham' web site. The primary and secondary heads groups were asked to have a watching brief on recruitment and retention going forward and to commission further work if necessary. **Action: John Dexter.**
- The budget update report was noted.

3) Board restructure proposal:

- CH tabled a proposed new structure and way of working for the EIB on behalf of the Business sub-group (attached).
- SW proposed an additional sub-group to look specifically at employability issues. CH felt 'employability' should be on the agenda of all of the proposed headteacher sub-groups and the Outcomes sub-group rather than being a separate sub-group. JDy pointed out that the Vulnerable Children sub-group is already gathering data on employability and looking at this issue. Following discussion, EIB asked the Business sub-group to look further at how 'employability' can have a high priority in the new structure. **Action: Chris Hall**
- EIB agreed to adopt the new structure.

4) Update from EIB sub-groups and projects:

- JDy updated EIB on the work of the Vulnerable Children sub-group. The group has met twice now and identified which groups of children should be classified as 'vulnerable' and therefore the focus of the group's work. JDy has written to the chair of the parliamentary education select committee offering to present written evidence during autumn 2018 to inform their work. Links have been established with a Trust in Barnsley facing similar challenges to Nottingham to learn about their use of alternative provision and its impact on reducing the use of exclusion. The sub-group is also looking at the achievement of vulnerable children and equality of opportunity in terms of access to GCSE and vocational qualifications for those in alternative provision. A very high proportion of children in alternative provision have special educational needs. The Ofsted area reviews currently being undertaken are concentrating on the proportion of students with special educational needs who are excluded from mainstream schools and are in some cases pursuing this back to the excluding schools. There are a high number of children at Denewood and Unity pupil referral units without a mainstream school place. For instance, there are 88 youngsters in Year 11 alone which is not far off the size of a Year 11 cohort in some of our smaller mainstream secondary schools. The sub-group is also looking at the situation of children at risk of being drawn into organised crime and working with the appropriate authorities.
- A small group of city schools are responsible for most of the permanent exclusions. It is expensive for the city who have to pick up the cost of their provision as well as damaging to those students' future

economic well-being. AM stated that the exclusions from just one school last year had cost the local authority £0.75 million.

- JDy reported that there is no further capacity at the pupil referral units and if there are further permanent exclusions this year, which is likely on past trends, the city will be unable to meet its statutory obligations to provide for these youngsters. CH said that the EIB should look at the individual school data and have a transparent debate about why some schools rarely exclude and others exclude very high numbers of mainly vulnerable children. SH reported that the East Midlands and Humber regional schools commissioner has been commissioned by Sir David Carter, the national schools commissioner, to investigate the excessive use of exclusion nationally. Ofsted are also focusing on the inclusivity of schools and their use of exclusion in school inspections. EIB agreed to make the use of exclusion by Nottingham schools a future discussion item. **Action: John Dexter.**

4) EIB project review:

- JDe outlined the current projects sponsored by the EIB and the impact they have had so far.
- SH updated EIB on work to improve pupils' experience of transition from the primary to secondary phase. There is some good practice in the city but also aspects where transition is not as seamless as it could be. For instance, the transfer information provided by primary schools is sometimes incomplete which means for provision for vulnerable children may not be in place as it should be on their arrival at secondary. Carl Elder, principal at Bluecoat Beechdale Academy, is leading a SSIF bid for the city on improving our transition work and other schools are encouraged to participate. PF suggested this should be on the agenda of the new primary heads sub-group. **Action: Sian Hampton and John Dexter.**

5) Admissions project:

- DA explained that the purpose of this agenda item is to establish the main 'facts' about secondary school admissions across and around the city. Patterns in secondary admissions are driven by parental choice and by individual schools' admissions criteria. Having established the facts at this board meeting, it is intended that the board will discuss what might be done to tackle any inequity identified at the July meeting.
- Tackling 'admission by house price' was mentioned in the 2017 Tory manifesto although it is unclear whether the government now has any inclination to try and progress this difficult issue. The Sutton Trust have agreed to work with EIB.
- PB presented a summary of the patterns of secondary admissions across the city in 2016 (attached). These patterns are likely to be exacerbated as the bulge in secondary age pupils works its way through over the next few years.
- The EIB noted the following facts about admissions in 2016:
 - A. There is a net migration of pupils from Nottingham to Nottinghamshire.
 - B. Nottingham loses a higher proportion of high attaining children to Nottinghamshire secondaries. The pupils who transfer into the city are on average lower attaining than the existing Nottingham pupils. Consequently, the city's attainment at Key Stage 4 is likely to always be below average even if progress at secondary is outstanding.
 - C. The pupils who are leaving the city do so through parents exercising their right to express a preference for their secondary school. Their success in doing so may be limited as the current bulge in the secondary population works its way through.

D. The pattern of emigration is principally:

- From Blessed Robert Widmerpool Catholic Primary-> The Becket School
- From Our Lady & St Edward Catholic Primary -> The Becket School
- From Hempshill Hall Primary -> The Kimberley School
- From Haydn Primary -> Redhill Academy/Christ the King
- From South Wilford CofE -> The West Bridgford School.

E. Four schools were over-subscribed in 2016 and rejected a significant number of applicants. These were Bluecoat Academy, Emmanuel, Fernwood and Nottingham Free School.

F. Equality of access for disadvantaged students:

- In the schools which are oversubscribed, application of the admissions criteria result in disadvantaged students having a markedly lower chance of being accepted.
- Disadvantaged students appear to apply for places in schools where there are higher proportions of disadvantaged students and vice versa. This is probably related to geography but perhaps also to low aspirations.
- Consequently, parental choice and the application of oversubscription criteria result in social segregation even where schools are in close proximity. We know from the maps of some schools (eg NUA) that secondary age students are able to utilise the city's good transport links to travel from all parts of the city to a single provider so distance from school is unlikely to be a deterrent.
- Other schools are currently unaffected by distance from school as they are undersubscribed. This may change as the bulge in the secondary population works its way through. The leader of Nottinghamshire county council has informed DA that she believes county secondaries will become full over the next few years which will mean fewer Nottingham children will be able to gain places at county schools. AB confirmed this was likely to be the case.
- EIB asked for a paper summarising this data and what might be done about it to inform a debate at next EIB. **Action: David Anstead**

6) AOB

There was no other business