

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS & EDUCATION

COUNCILLOR DAVE HARLING

PORTFOLIO CO-ORDINATING

DIRECTOR: LINDA CLEGG

DATE: 27th July 2017

PROVISIONAL SATS RESULTS

Early indications of Primary school performance in 2017 is that there has been marked improvement at the end of Key Stage 2, in line with the national pattern, which saw a rise of 8% in the main measure (children at the expected level in Reading, Writing and Maths). Further analysis will be shared in the next Council Forum report.

FESTIVAL OF VOICE

The Blackburn with Darwen Music Service took part in the borough's Festival of Voice in June and July which opened with a Gala Concert at King Georges Hall on 22nd June. The festival is a summer programme of activities and performances across the local area and is a collaboration between the Council's Music Service, Blackburn Cathedral and BBC Radio Lancashire. The Music Service's annual Big Sing and Mini Sing events featured in the programme alongside new initiatives.

A whole singing challenge was launched as part of the festival. All schools received a newly commissioned song entitled 'Go to The Park' which encouraged children and their families to explore their local parks and open spaces. Primary schools were invited to sing the song during the festival and a live broadcast was aired on BBC Radio Lancashire with three schools performing in the studio with other schools tuning in to sing along as one choir.

CAREERS FAIR FOR ALL AGES

The careers fair 'Blackburn with Darwen is Hiring' will take place within Blackburn Cathedral and surrounding outside spaces on the 14th September. The event will run from 10.00am until 4.00pm and is targeted at young people over the age of 15 within schools, further education or higher education, and those not currently engaged in employment, education or training from within the borough and beyond. The event is also open to adults who may be actively seeking employment or who are looking to upskill or explore new opportunities.

Along with a large number of employers representing a variety of sectors, post 16 learning and training providers will also be present. An interactive event is being planned to engage the audience and to offer 'hands on' experience of a rich variety of employment opportunities, including apprenticeships. A number of short workshops will also be on offer to support young people in the recruitment process, and to raise awareness of the wide range of employment opportunities in specific sectors.

GOVERNORS' CONFERENCE: EMOTIONAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

This year's annual Governors' Conference on 13th May at Blackburn Central High School chose Emotional Health and Wellbeing as the theme. 120 governors and invited guests enjoyed hearing from the two speakers, Luke Rodgers from FosterFocus, and Jo Siddle, Headteacher at St Thomas' Pupil Referral Unit (PRU). Luke gave a very personal account of his early years growing up as a child in care and the challenges he faced and Jo spoke about the difficulties and successes with managing emotional behaviour and the strategies in place at the PRU to support a whole school approach.

There are a number of Emotional Health and Wellbeing projects underway in the borough's schools. The local authority's Virtual School, which works to ensure that children in public care get the best possible support with their education, has teamed up with St Cuthbert's CE Primary and Lancashire Care Foundation Trust (LCFT) to develop an Adverse Childhood

Experiences (ACE) pathfinder project. The project has trained the professionals within the school in ACEs and the potential impact on children as they grow older. When communicating with pupils about behaviour, the staff focus on the 'why' and understanding the 'triggers' rather than seeing behaviour as a problem that they have to fix. Learning from the project is being developed into a programme to use with a wider group of primary schools.

Similarly, the EmBRACE (Emotional and Brain Resilience to Adverse Childhood Experience) pilot was initiated within Witton Park Academy secondary school in Autumn 2016. This is a whole school approach to increase awareness of the consequences of ACEs, and equips staff and pupils with the skills and confidence to use trauma informed strategies. EmBRACE is achieved by supporting senior leadership teams and providing evidenced-based tools that enable both staff and pupils to adopt an ACE approach.

HEADTEACHER CHANGES

Michael Duxbury, Headteacher at St Peter's RC Primary School will be retiring at the end of the Summer term and will hand over the leadership of the school to Ann-Marie O'Neil. Additionally, the Headteachers leaving or have left to pursue other opportunities are Steve Bladon from Cedars Primary School who will be succeeded by Nicola Truman and Vikki Milne at Holy Trinity who will hand over to Kathryn Bolton.

We wish the outgoing Headteachers well and thank them for their service to the children and young people of the borough and look forward to working with the new appointments in September.

OFSTED INSPECTIONS UPDATE

Since the last Council Forum update, seven schools have received confirmation of an Ofsted 'short inspections' judgement and all retained their 'good' overall effectiveness rating. The schools are; Brunel Nursery School, Blackburn Central High School, Longshaw Junior School, Intack Primary School, Feniscowles Primary School; St James' C of E Primary School and Darwen Aldridge Community Academy.

Eight schools have received full inspection judgements since March. Holy Trinity VC Primary School and Meadowhead Junior School both received 'requires improvement' judgements compared with a previous 'good' judgement.

St Luke & St Philip's CE Primary School, Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School and Eden School all had their first inspections since becoming Academies and all received a 'requires improvement' judgement.

There was change too at Our Lady of Perpetual Succour RC Primary School with the school improving on the previous 'requires improvement' and judged to be 'good'. Likewise, improved judgements were noted for St Barnabas & St Paul's CE Primary School and St Cuthbert's CE Primary school who both received 'outstanding' judgements. All reports can be viewed online at reports.ofsted.gov.uk.

LINKING CLASSROOM PROJECT

The School Effectiveness Team has secured a start-up grant of £7000 and funding of up to £20,000 for the next 3 years to build links between classrooms in Blackburn with Darwen to promote social cohesion. The team has exceeded the target of linking 14 classrooms and training will take place for engaged schools in September. The project includes training for staff on SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural) development, British values, relationships, cohesion, ethos and classroom resources connected to equalities, diversity, sense of belonging and identity.