

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SELF-EVALUATION

To: **Children and Young People Committee**

Meeting Date: **10 October 2017**

From: **Wendi Ogle-Welbourn: Executive Director - People and Communities**

Electoral division(s): **All**

Forward Plan ref: **n/a** *Key decision:* **No**

Purpose: **The purpose of this paper is to present the Local Authority's School Improvement Self-evaluation for 2017.**

Recommendation: **The Committee is asked to note the findings of this paper and comment as appropriate.**

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In 2014 Ofsted published a framework for inspecting local authority arrangements for school improvement. This framework was updated in September 2015.
- 1.2 Ofsted do not have a cycle for inspecting local authorities. Most inspections are of local authorities causing concern; some inspections are of local authorities with good outcomes to provide an evidence base of effective practice.
- 1.3 Very few local authority inspections have been carried out in the last two years. The increase in the number of academies is part of the reason for this because the focus is principally local authorities' role with regards to maintained schools. Also, Ofsted is able to monitor local authorities in other ways, for example by telephone surveys of schools' views of the support they receive from their local authority. Cambridgeshire County Council has not been inspected under this framework.
- 1.4 The Learning Directorate's Schools Intervention Service has evaluated Cambridgeshire's performance against this framework on an annual basis. The format of this evaluation has been developed in discussion with the Eastern Region School Improvement Leads, who also organise a programme of peer reviews. Cambridgeshire's last peer review was spring 2014.
- 1.5 The framework has nine aspects (sections). A judgement is made for each criterion and an overall judgement is made for the aspect:
 - 1 = very effective, demonstrable impact
 - 2 = effective, emerging impact
 - 3 = not fully effective, some impact
 - 4 = not effective, little impact
- 1.6 A brief overview of key performance indicators is given in Appendix 1.

2. SUMMARY OF SELF-EVALUATION

- 2.1 This year's self-evaluation is presented as Appendix 2. A summary of the grades is given below:

Aspect	Description	Self-evaluation
1	The effectiveness of corporate and strategic leadership of school improvement	2
2	The clarity and transparency of policy and strategy for supporting schools and other providers' improvement, and how clearly the LA has defined its monitoring, challenge, support and intervention roles	2
3	The extent to which the LA knows its schools and other providers, their performance and the standards they achieve and how effectively support is focused on areas of greatest need	2
4	The effectiveness of the LA's identification of, and intervention in, underperforming schools, including the use of formal powers available to the LA	2
5	The impact of LA support and challenge over time and the rate at which schools and other providers are improving	3↑
6	The extent to which the LA commissions and brokers support for schools and other providers	3↑
7	The effectiveness of strategies to support highly effective leadership and management in schools and other providers	3↑
8	Support and challenge for school governance	3↑
9	The way the LA uses any available funding to effect improvement, including how it is focused on areas of greatest need	2

2.2 Overall, progress has been made with the current school improvement priorities:

- to increase the percentage of schools in Cambridgeshire that are good or outstanding
- to accelerate the achievement of vulnerable groups
- to improve pupil outcomes in writing and phonics at Key Stage 1 and in mathematics at Key Stage 2

However, although vulnerable groups have made progress the available data suggests that very few have significantly closed the achievement gap with other pupils.

2.3 This year's provisional results have indicated that writing is an emerging priority and a range of actions are being developed to address this, including:

- Targeted support for schools with low writing results from Local Authority English Advisers
- English Subject Leaders Courses (termly) to have a focus on improving writing
- The introduction of 'Pobble' in some schools, an online resource for benchmarking children's writing across the country
- Accelerating achievement courses in Year 6 for Writing, for class teachers
- A project for targeted schools to increase expectations and achievement at Year 1 is being developed with the Cambridgeshire School Improvement Board

- A Year 1 Phonics project is continuing in collaboration with the Cambridge Teaching Schools Network

2.4 Maths attainment and progress remains a priority at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2:

- Schools with low maths results are targeted for additional support from LA Maths Advisers
- Proven interventions such as 'Improving Progress in Maths', 'First Class at Number', 'Success at Arithmetic' are used in targeted schools
- Specific courses are being run for teachers and Teaching Assistants
- Maths courses for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) – 'Diminishing the Differences'
- The Maths team are working collaboratively with the Maths Hub (a DfE funded, Teaching School led initiative) and are working on a project with NRICH (a Cambridge based international maths project) which focusses on Problem Solving
- The local authority is developing a joint project with one of the Teaching Schools to bid for funding (School Self-improvement Fund) for schools with low maths results.

2.5 Actions to address any areas of development are briefly summarised in the Self Evaluation Form with detailed actions recorded in Service action plans.

2.6 The self-evaluation is re-visited in the spring term when the validated performance data is published by the DfE.

2.7 This self-evaluation is a working document for the school improvement service. A list of commonly used acronyms is given in Appendix 3.

3.0 ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

3.1.1 The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Improved educational outcomes will provide a more highly skilled workforce; and
- A key factor in major companies' decisions to move to Cambridgeshire is access to good and outstanding schools for their workforce.

3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

3.2.1 The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- There is a positive correlation between educational outcomes, standards of health and independent living.

3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

3.3.1 The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Poor educational progress of vulnerable groups correlates with poor life

chances. Children who fall behind find it hard to catch up. In particular, children from low-income families, as measured by eligibility for Free school Meals, achieve badly compared with children not eligible for Free School Meals.

4.0 SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

- 4.1.1 There are no significant implications within this category. The actions identified can be met from within the Learning Directorate's current budget.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

- 4.2.1 Not applicable

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk

- 4.3.1 The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006 places upon LAs a duty to promote high standards and the fulfilment of potential in all schools.

4.4 Equality and Diversity

- 4.4.1 The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006 places upon LAs a duty to promote high standards and the fulfilment of potential in all schools. This report highlights the need to accelerate the achievement of vulnerable groups in Cambridgeshire.

4.6 Engagement and Communications

- 4.6.1 Not applicable.

4.7 Localism and Local Member Involvement

- 4.7.1 Not applicable.

4.8 Public Health Implications

- 4.8.1 Not applicable.

Source Documents	Location
<p>Inspecting local authority arrangements for supporting school improvement: guidance for providers</p>	<p>https://www.gov.uk/guidance/inspecting-local-authority-arrangements-for-supporting-school-improvement-guidance-for-providers</p>